

THE
AMATEUR PAINTER'S HANDBOOK

B O O K S B Y T A U B E S

THE TECHNIQUE OF OIL PAINTING

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU LIKE

STUDIO SECRETS

OIL PAINTING FOR THE BEGINNER

THE PAINTER'S QUESTION AND ANSWER BOOK

The
AMATEUR PAINTER'S
Handbook

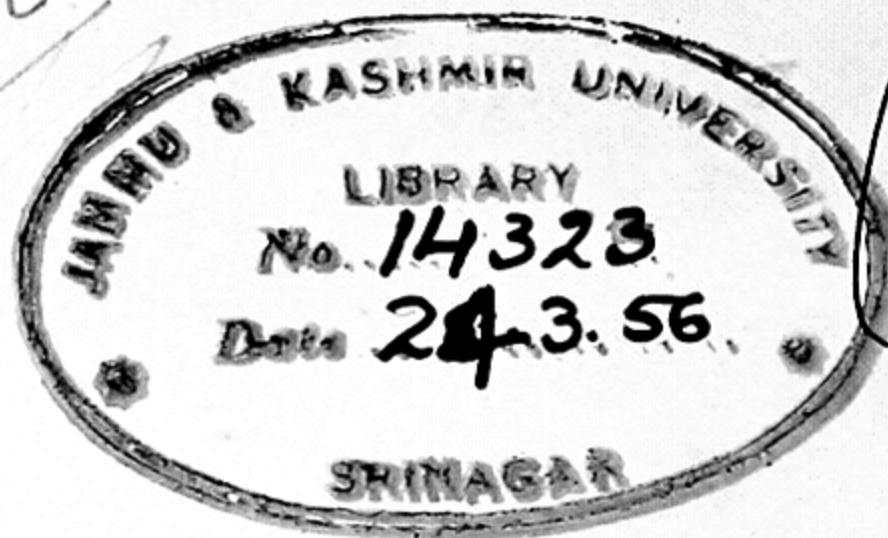
Frederic Taubes

Photographs by Walfred Moore

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T O

Felicia Mauersberger

I N F R I E N D S H I P



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Foreword

The aim of this manual is to acquaint the amateur painter with the tools and materials of painting and to help him improve the quality of his work by giving appropriate instructions on technical problems.

My chief concern in this book has been to reduce painting problems to their simplest, most elementary forms. I have confined myself to fundamentals, avoiding such information and practices as will not be immediately useful to the painter. If later, however, he desires to embark upon extensive research into paint techniques, he will find information on this subject in some of my other books. In simplifying the processes of painting I am by no means advocating flimsy practices. On the contrary, whatever has been said here can be utilized with profit by the professional painter as well.

Frederic Taubes

New York 1946

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INTRODUCTION

THAT I am addressing the amateur painter will undoubtedly cause many a raised eyebrow. Haven't I, in several books and countless articles, upheld the importance of profound craftsmanship? Haven't I always pointed toward the principles of professionalism? And now, it would seem, I have suffered a change of heart. Yes, I am changing perpetually in relation to details. In essentials, however, I believe my mind remains inexorably bound to the same ideas.

Professionalism

As we know, the business of the painter today is not entirely what it used to be at the time when art was a skilled profession. Then painters were craftsmen and not just ineffable "artists." You could order from their studios a shop sign for a chimney sweep or a soap-maker; an altar, or perhaps a portrait of your wife. Painting was chiefly done to order. In the course of centuries painting lost most of its social functions—it became the jealously guarded private affair of the artist. The professionalism of the painting brethren thus became ambiguous—for self-expression can hardly be looked upon as a profession.

Some Definitions

Before plunging head-on into complex problems of esthetics, let us look at some old nomenclatures and the maze of their present-day interpretations. The term "amateur painter" denotes a person who

paints for pastime. For him painting is not a way of making a living, but rather a way of escaping temporarily from the business of making a living. In contrast, the professional painter starts, as a rule, to function under the impulse of momentary inspiration—which may or may not come on regular working days. Since the professional painter of today is not painting to order (for the most part, that is) he is often—quite often, let me tell you—confined to dawdling. In other words, whereas the amateur spends his workdays at a bench or a desk, the professional may be just dreaming. In effect, they may find themselves at the easel at the same time. . . .

Sometimes the amateur is referred to as a dilettante, which is a rather disparaging word tinged with some harsh implications. "Dilettante" is now accepted as an antonym for "professional" and suggests that a person thus tagged lacks skill, training, and a reasonable knowledge of the fundamentals of art. Curiously enough today (and for that matter for some decades past), to be untrained is not necessarily looked upon as something negative. On the contrary, lack of skill is often considered a mark of distinction, whereas the skilled professional is frequently regarded by our modernistic apologists as useless and out of tune with the time.

"My Science Will Destroy Everyone Who Comes After Me."

—MICHELANGELO

Although the deprecators of skill in connection with art are right in one respect, namely, that three, six, or ten years of academic training do not make a person an artist, the reverse—that is, the

abrogation of training—will hardly produce art, nor will it offer any solution to the problem as to how to synthesize art.

Let us look now at the quotation at the head of this paragraph, to which the entire problem seems to be anchored. Said Michelangelo, in effect, "My science of the anatomy and proportions of the human body is so far-reaching and complete that all that is left for you folks is to follow me, and, mark my words, you won't come off quite as well as I did." The master, skimming dangerously the fringes of the academic, knew well the creeping paralysis often induced by academic knowledge.

Academy—the Wasteland

Acquisition of knowledge is one thing and a sensible use of it is quite another. At times knowledge may become as futile as ignorance—this is an old adage, although some of our modern cognoscenti have given it a cunning twist—they often raise ignorance to the status of virtue out of a desperate desire to negate the traditional.

To realize the futility of ordinary academic knowledge—that is, of knowledge confined to "correct" reproduction of objects—consider the work of the average national academician; as a rule it is characterized by various degrees of impotence. References to "academic skill," "suave technique," as proffered today by some art critics, point to their unfamiliarity with the issues of painting. Academic technique is, as a rule, a dull technique. At this point we shall once and for all recognize that the term "academic" denotes really nothing but a condition of artistic inertia.

Craftsmanship—and a Word on Drawing

Now, as to that portentous word—craftsmanship. In its true meaning craftsmanship is a compound of several qualities, all related to artistic skill—all-round skill, to be exact. There is, for example, a skill to be acquired by following diligently the routine of drawing from life. Undoubtedly, when a person applies himself assiduously to drawing from nature, though he have but a modest talent, in due time he is bound to reach a certain degree of accomplishment. He will be able to follow nature, to copy the apparent, the factual, in short he will achieve that verisimilitude so much admired by the esthetically untutored.

However, by reaching this goal of reasonable verisimilitude, the cause of art will not be advanced. If imagination, expressiveness, originality, a feeling for line, are not the accompanying elements of a drawing, what artistic merit can possibly accrue? As we know, all the better commercial illustrators have the most perfect command of academic drawing—minus any artistic significance.

We should keep well in mind that an anatomic drawing by a Pollaiuolo, a Leonardo, or a Dürer, for example, was a scientific research, a journey into the unknown, whereas today the problems it poses to the artist are of totally different character—they involve routine more than anything else.

Craftsmanship—the Construction of a Painting

The successful composition of a painting depends on skill, but, in contrast to drawing, where skill is gained by practice, the knack of

balancing the space of a picture is largely a matter of instinct. However, there are a few fundamentals which govern a good composition, all of which are discussed in the last chapter of this book.

In perspective—that is, in *scientific perspective*, which relies on certain optical rules—instinct would be of little avail. Scientific perspective was promulgated at the onset of the Renaissance, but some of the Baroque masters were already flouting its laws. Somehow they discovered that the “parallels which meet on the horizon at eye level” (the principle of scientific perspective) do not necessarily lead to artistic salvation. Many great painters—El Greco, for example—did not bother to follow the rules of such a perspective. Since preoccupation with mechanical matters is always involved in scientific perspective, stultification of the mind would be the outcome of slavish adherence to such principles.

Some More Reflections on the Values of Various Principles

Another element of the compound called craftsmanship is referred to as *paint quality*, and this relates specifically to a painting's texture, contour, and brush-strokes. While discussing these definitions I must state that next to the manner in which one uses colors, paint quality is the element which can make or unmake a painting. It seems to me to be a proven fact that paintings which are “out of drawing,” “out of perspective,” out of verisimilitude with nature, can be great works of art providing they possess paint quality, good color and—imagination.

Distortion—a Double-edged Sword

A form may be "correct," or distorted. Distortions are used for the purpose of dramatization, for the conditioning of natural forms, for the sake of heightened expression. It is an age-old question whether an artist distorts because he does not know how to draw "correctly," or whether he is such a cunning architect that he can at will condition anatomy, for example, to suit his purpose. My investigation into this problem has shown me that there is no rule by which an artist can abide with invariable result. I also admit candidly that my original opinion on this subject has had to be rectified to some extent. Once I believed that knowledge of anatomy, for example, was imperative, and that without this knowledge the use of convincing distortion would be impossible. Today, with the experience gained through teaching large numbers of the most diverse types of students, I am not certain about it. I am rather inclined to believe that the frequently heard comment, "He goes wrong because he doesn't know how to draw" is really without meaning, because of its implication that "to know how to draw" means to be true to nature. Hence, "true to nature" becomes an axis around which the "knowing" revolves. If this were true, a mediocre but correct drawing would be a work of art.

Did the neolithic "artist," for example, whose drawings are often masterpieces of linear expression, distort because he did not know how to draw? Of course he didn't know—in an academic sense—how to draw. Or, is the Cameroonian bushman capable of creating an anatomical image à la Donatello? Of course not, but his figures,

although they lack anatomy, are very expressive, often magical. No, he is not using distortion as an excuse because his education in anatomy has been neglected and he is therefore incapable of locating correctly the position of the *processus coracoideus*.

Intuition the Mother of Art?

Training versus intuition—here we are again. There should be little doubt that I, of all others, would advocate systematic training—I have always been a strong believer in a system of apprenticeship, after the pattern of the medieval guilds. Of course I am well aware that such a statement is of a more or less whimsical nature, for the realities of our present-day life and the painter's position in society make the idea of apprenticeship entirely chimerical.

Should an aspiring painter, then, especially one painting chiefly in his spare time, rely on his artistic instinct alone and forgo training? There can not be an answer to this which would fit all variations of talent. This is with me a rather new realization, born of recent experience. Some people require training in anatomy, some do not. With certain painters of the "primitive" variety, the conception of nature is such that to make them imitate the object of their representation would be futile, well-nigh absurd. These people do not see objects as they appear on the camera's mat glass; they seem to have no sense of realistic proportions nor of effects of light and shade, but they are nevertheless not necessarily lost to art. Sometimes their sense of the essential and artistically relevant is astounding.

Here again, as I have repeatedly observed, one element in painting is communicable without reference to proportions gone haywire

—the *paint quality*. In this I have succeeded quite well by pointing to the values of a certain color, medium, canvas, or painting tool in order to improve the paint quality of a student and thereby widen and deepen the range of his artistic expression.

And Now the Proofs, Please

Some of the postulates made on preceding pages may sound dogmatic and require, perhaps, a more precise backing by facts. The gist of these statements is that the artistic value of a painting depends to a great extent on its paint quality. I have said that conformity to pragmatic truths—at least at certain times in history—has no relevance in art. I have given one example—El Greco, a nonconformist as to the laws of perspective and proportion (although the classic principle and a masterful understanding of anatomy underlies all his work). The work of Duccio displays a direct ignorance of anatomy without any impairment of its artistic quality and, when we advance to our own times, the profound disregard of conventional truths by artists such as Henri Rousscau, or the American, John Cane, could in some instances scarcely be more complete. Yet the paint quality in their best work is of a very high order. Of course, hand in hand with the paint quality goes an extraordinary poetic imagination, and a magnificent sense of color which imparts to some of their paintings considerable artistic merit.

At last, after journeying far afield we arrive at the problem of:

Colors

Is a good color sense innate or is it acquired? This question is often put to me, but since coloristic ability does not follow any rules I can

not answer it dogmatically. Some people, as it seems, are born with a good color sense and some must strive for it.

Should one use colors with profusion or economy? This is another question often heard among art students. I have on many occasions indulged in the belief that the greatest virtue lies in an ascetic use of color; many of the great works of art rely exclusively on effects of light and shade with an almost total absense of color. This does not alter the fact that varied, harmonious, even spectacular colors give greater joy to the eye. But it is not color as such that lends enchantment to a painting, it is the manner in which it is nuanced. The nuance, or value, of a color is of such importance that lack of taste in this respect may easily outweigh all other merits a painting may have. As we all know, a painting that appears fine in a black and white reproduction which reveals the distribution of light and shade, and of course composition and design as well, can lose out entirely when viewed in full color.

What Is and What Is Not Communicable in Art Education

First there is talent, which is a faculty for artistic expression. This innate quality of the individual is not always fixed and unchangeable in its nature. It can usually be influenced in many ways and developed in certain directions. Just as a great talent will sometimes disintegrate and end up in a blind alley, so a lesser talent can be developed to respectable heights.

How much, then, is communicable from teacher to pupil in the way of the art education? First there is the art of drawing. Can one be taught how to draw? To this I answer that academic drawing—

drawing which relies on the classic principles of proportion, the effects of light and shade and perspective—is teachable. What is, however, of essential value in drawing can not be acquired by any arbitrary scheme. From the artistic point of view, it is really of no importance to know a “method”—how to get a likeness in five minutes, or how to make a knee look like a knee and not like a soft roll. In drawing, the feeling for the flow, tension, strength, and delicacy of line are the things that count. What is essential in drawing can be reached by developing one’s sensibilities and not by any devices purporting to get the student over the hump with ease; in drawing, the hump should, as it were, be always in front of us.

In composing a picture, instinct may often replace instruction. The principle of the arrangement of objects or the organization of space in a painting does not differ from any other arrangement which depends on harmony in the distribution of masses. Even people with little artistic training are often capable of recognizing the reasons which make an arrangement harmonious or confused.

I doubt whether outside help avails toward developing imagination. This quality is self-acting, needing neither inducement nor pampering. One either has or has not the power of imagination which, like originality, is a primary, volatile quality of the mind.

Taste, on the other hand, can be acquired. I do not believe that anyone is born with good or bad taste. Good taste is usually developed by contact with things of beauty. When referring to taste we should be aware that it is a somewhat complex quality since it embraces the sense of color as well as that of composition and of subject matter. Since in painting the use of colors is strongly dependent on knowl-

edge of their properties and behavior, it stands to reason that the more this knowledge is developed, the greater the likelihood of acquiring a sense of color. Since the use of colors is of such great consequence in painting, I have devoted a large space in this book to discussion of coloristic problems. In the matter of colors, as in actual application of paints to the canvas, the guidance of a teacher can go a long way toward helping the student to an understanding of the problems which he faces when trying to articulate his thoughts with paints and brushes.

In conclusion, it appears that no fundamental, sharply defined outlines exist between the professional and the amateur. Whether or not one makes a living by his art is beside the point. Let me assure the reader that most professionals do not succeed very well in supporting themselves by their art. Moreover, both the professional and the amateur will be good painters or bad, depending on their gifts. It stands to reason, however, that the more effort expended on developing one's faculties, the better the chance of perfecting them.

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PART I

MATERIALS AND TOOLS

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THE following is a list of materials which I consider indispensable for unhampered work:

Easel, palette. Thirteen colors—white lead, ultramarine, viridian green, prussian blue, naples yellow, light ochre, cadmium yellow, cadmium red, venetian red, burnt sienna, burnt umber, ivory black, alizarin crimson. *List of Colors*

Two kinds of painting brushes—bristle brushes numbered according to sizes—4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12—and sable brushes numbered 5, 12, 18. These are all flat brushes. A set of round sable brushes in sizes 4, 10, and 16, and a so-called utility brush (the kind used for painting furniture) one inch wide. (The sizes can, of course, vary slightly from those suggested above.) *List of Brushes*

In addition, two palette knives—one possessing an elastic blade and the other a stiffer blade. The first will be used in painting and the second in underpainting. *Palette Knives*

Various media such as: linseed oil, oil-resin painting medium, varnish, varnolene, cobalt drier, fixative. *Painting Media*

Finally there is the canvas and the stretcher on which it must be affixed and also the panel which can be substituted for the canvas.

No limitations can be laid down as to the choice of sizes for paintings. But it is generally more convenient to use moderately proportioned stretcher sizes, from about 8 x 12 inches to about 25 x 30. However, the nature of the composition will ultimately determine the matter of a painting's proportions.

*Standard
Stretcher Sizes*

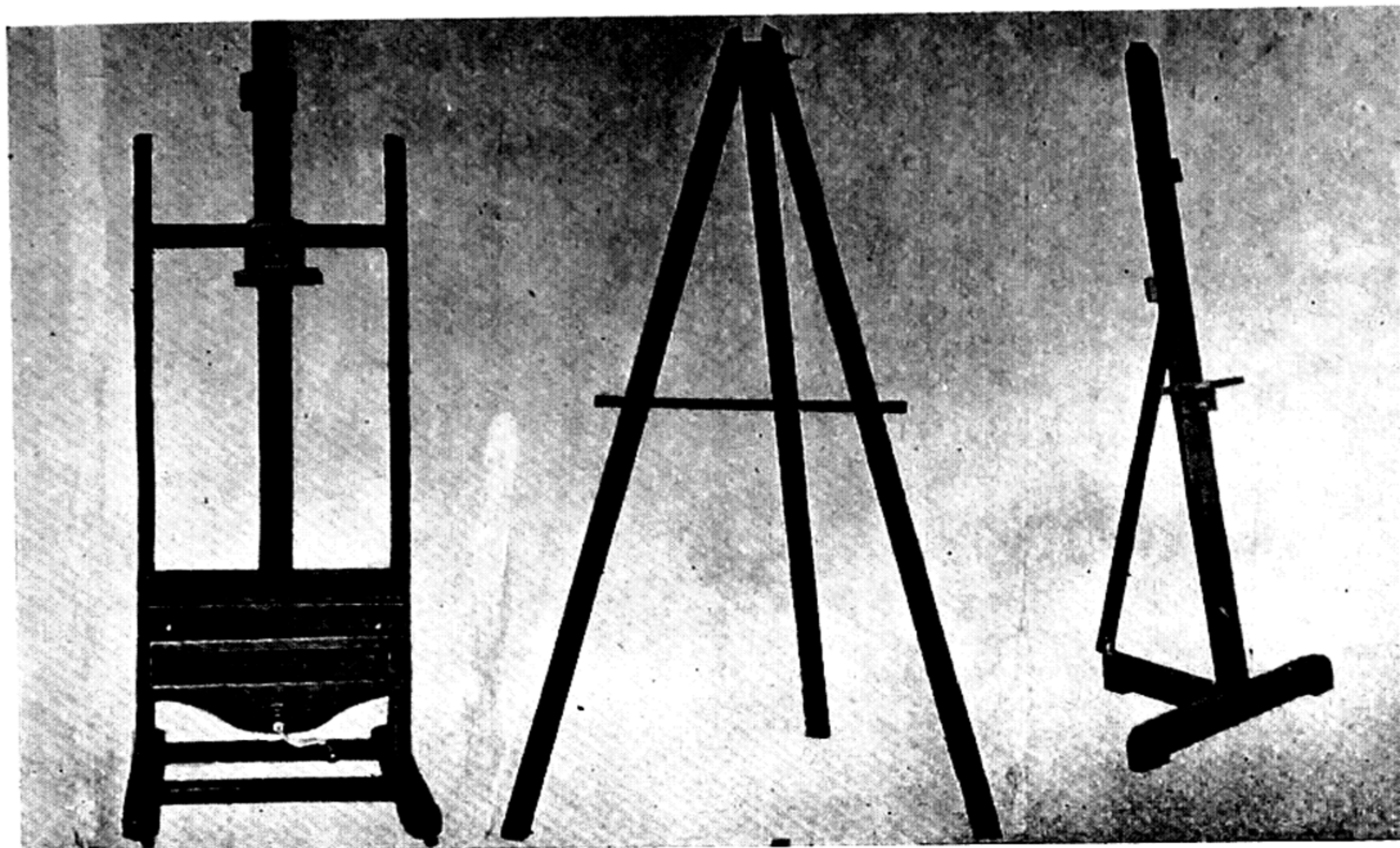
There is no advantage in choosing the standard sizes—10 x 12, 16 x 20, 20 x 24, 25 x 30, other than the fact that dealers often carry frames to fit these sizes.

*Inappropriate
Brush*

The above list of materials may seem formidable. However, none of the enumerated items can be dispensed with. It may also seem that on the following pages I have given too much space to the description of these materials. Some amateur painters may consider investigation of their tools as cumbersome and irrelevant—a business which should be left to the professionals. Such a conception, I assure the reader, is false. How essential this knowledge is I have seen on many occasions when art students were defeated at such an elementary task as the transfer of paint from brush to canvas. The effort was stymied simply by the choice of an inappropriate brush. Equipped with stiff bristles such as are found on a tooth brush, the instrument had too much rigidity—instead of depositing paint onto the canvas, it scraped it off.

*Deficient Paint
(See also page
40)*

On another occasion, an art student covered the canvas with paint and suddenly discovered that what was left on its surface was a brittle paste that could not be very well moved with the brush. A student who did not understand the nature of his painting ground would not realize that the oil had been drawn from the paint by the absorbent priming of his canvas; in another instance, the paint that comes from the tube may be too thin or too thick to be usable—all trifling and annoying matters which can easily be remedied. These are only a few cases where seemingly insurmountable difficulties can be overcome as soon as one becomes familiar with the nature of the tools and materials and their behavior in painting.



1

2

3

PLATE 1-A

Various types of easel

Nos. 1 and 3, sturdy types

No. 2 useful for smaller canvases

The Easel

Before describing the actual tools used in painting let us look at certain indispensable fixtures such as the easel and the palette (Plates 1-A and 1-B). The first can be had in various constructions, the choice of which depends on individual preference. The main consideration in selecting an easel, however, should be its stability—that is, resistance to the impact of the painter's brush and palette knife. Nothing is more annoying than to have a canvas rock, duck, and dodge the

*Good and Bad
Easels*

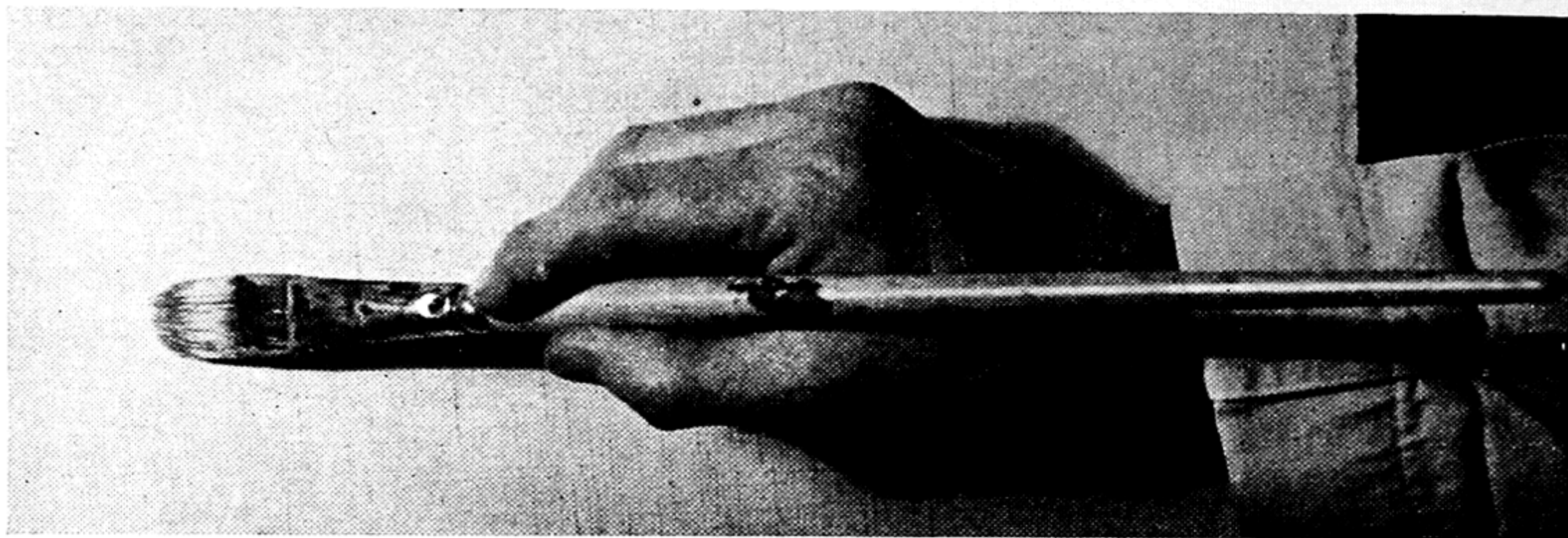


PLATE 2-A

Normal position of arm while painting

strokes of your brush and otherwise threaten to collapse whenever your painting temperament gets the upper hand. Another important feature of an easel is that the ledge upon which the canvas rests can be readily moved up and down. Since this lowering and raising of the canvas is a frequent action while painting, a stubborn or lazy contraption which prevents these movements of the ledge can become a nuisance.

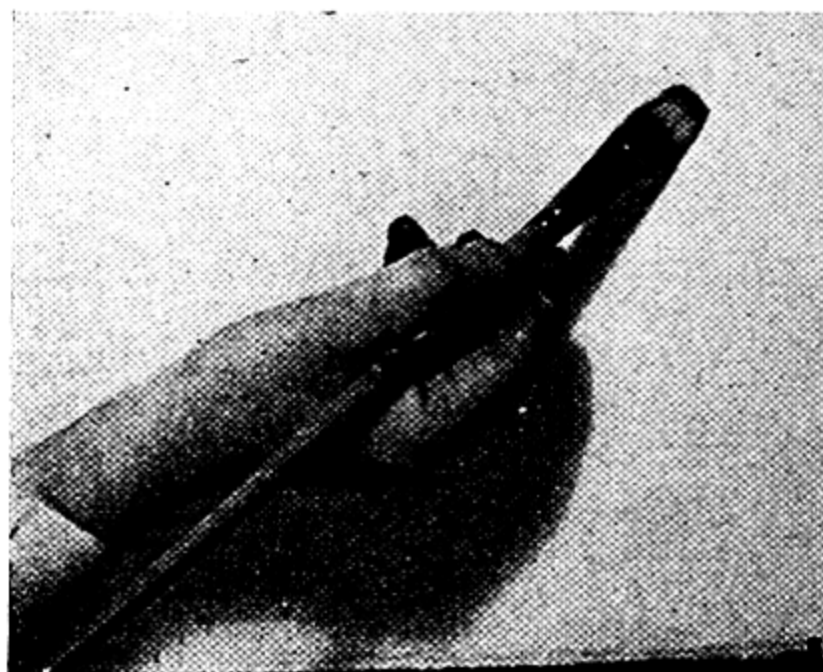


PLATE 2-B

Arm held too high

While speaking of the easel, it is appropriate to consider the position of the arm while painting. It has been my experience that students, especially beginners, usually place the canvas far too high, thus being compelled to raise the arm skyward (Plates 2-A and 2-B), a position which will in a short time become unduly fatiguing. The most convenient position of the canvas on the easel for most people is just below the eye level, which permits the arm to work with a slight tilt downward.

Watch the Position of Your Arm

The Palette

Palettes come in all manner of shapes and are made of different materials such as wood, glass, enamel, porcelain, and plastic (Plate 1-B).

The Palette

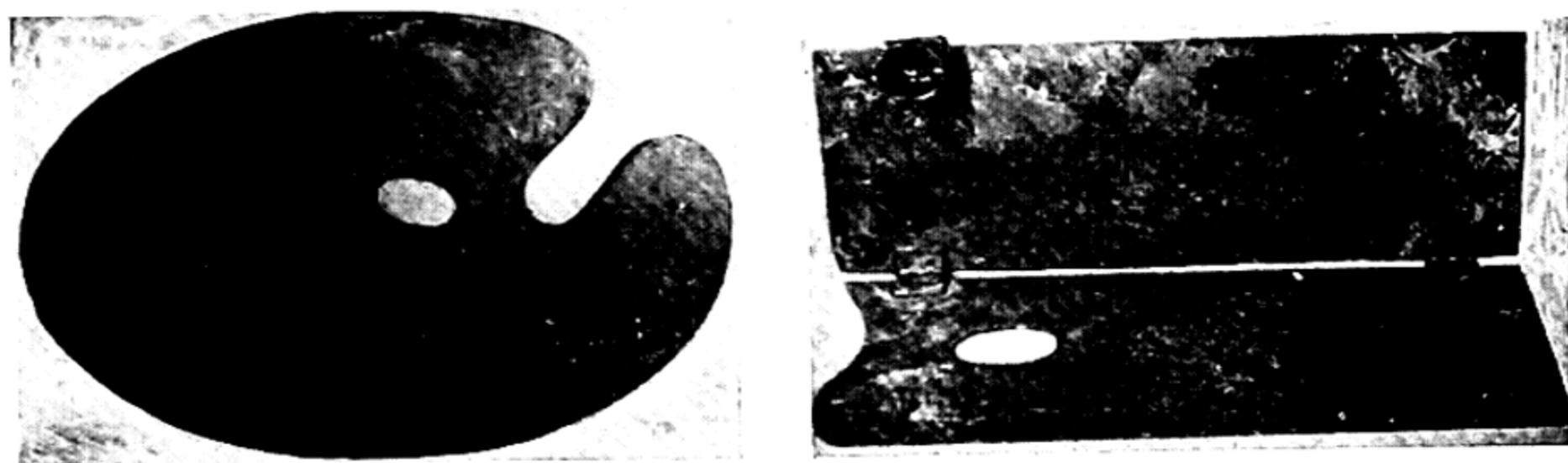


PLATE 1-B

- No. 1 Oval hardwood palette
No. 2 Folding palette with oil cup

There is no rule as to which type of palette is more appropriate; I have seen virtual masterpieces produced by a painter using a very dirty palette which once did duty as a windowpane. So I hesitate to make a definite recommendation. However, a rather large wooden palette of about 16 inches square is a good choice. Some palettes are

Folding Palette

equipped with hinges which allow them to fold and thus protect the paint placed on one of the boards. A folding palette is convenient for taking on trips.

It is best to have a palette of a neutral color, since actual painting is generally done not on a white canvas but on a previously prepared underpainting. If we accept the method discussed in Part II, Chapter III, that an underpainting is to precede the final painting, mixing colors on a white palette would offer some difficulties—it is not easy to arrive at proper color relations on such a palette.

Priming New, Raw-wood Palette

A new raw-wood palette should first be made non-absorbent by sealing the open pores of the wood with oil paint. (I prefer this to the traditional procedure of saturating the palette with linseed oil.) A few colors mixed with white paint so as to produce a neutral tone should be spread on the palette with a palette knife and then scraped clean from the surface. Whatever paint remains will in time form a slick nonabsorbent surface which will not drain off oil from paints placed on it. In time, a palette made of light wood acquires an opalescent quality of neutral tones which are most agreeable to the eye.

Keeping Palette Clean

After finishing a day's work, the paint remaining on the palette should be wiped off the palette with a rag; meticulous wiping will leave the surface polished to a high gloss. Unless the paint has dried on it, it is inadvisable to use turpentine for the purpose of cleaning the palette, as it will soften the crust of paint with which the palette was impregnated.

When the paint left on the edge of the palette becomes hardened throughout, it should be scraped with a strong sharp palette knife or a putty knife. Unused paint which remains along the edge of the

palette need not be scraped off after a day's work; some paint out of the tube will remain in usable condition for a long time. Should this paint become superficially hardened after prolonged exposure to air, the hard skin which has formed on its surface can be removed. Within, the paint will remain soft.

A convenient way to keep paint soft out of the tube is to cover it with a piece of thin cellophane, which shuts off access of air. Thus protected, the paint on the palette will remain soft for weeks or months.

*Keeping Paint
Fresh on Palette*

How To Use the Palette

Balancing the palette on the arm when painting is not comfortable; it hinders one's mobility and does not permit mixing of paint with the greatest amount of freedom. It is far more relaxing to place the palette on a stool or on a small table at the left side.

Two small cups attached to the right upper corner of the palette are all one requires for holding a painting medium and varnish (Plate 1-B).

HERE, more than anywhere else, the novice is likely to make a bad investment. Invariably when examining the paint box of a beginner I find a collection of perfectly useless brushes.

To begin with, there are no bargains in brushes. A cheap brush is always a bad and useless brush, or at least it becomes useless so quickly as to be quite expensive in the end. To demonstrate the difference in appearance of a good and a mediocre brush (the latter need not be necessarily of lowest quality) I have assembled both categories on Plates 3-A and 3-B. A well-made brush has bristles which curve from both ends of the ferrule towards the middle; the bristles placed in the middle are straight. Such brushes are generally made

Good Brush

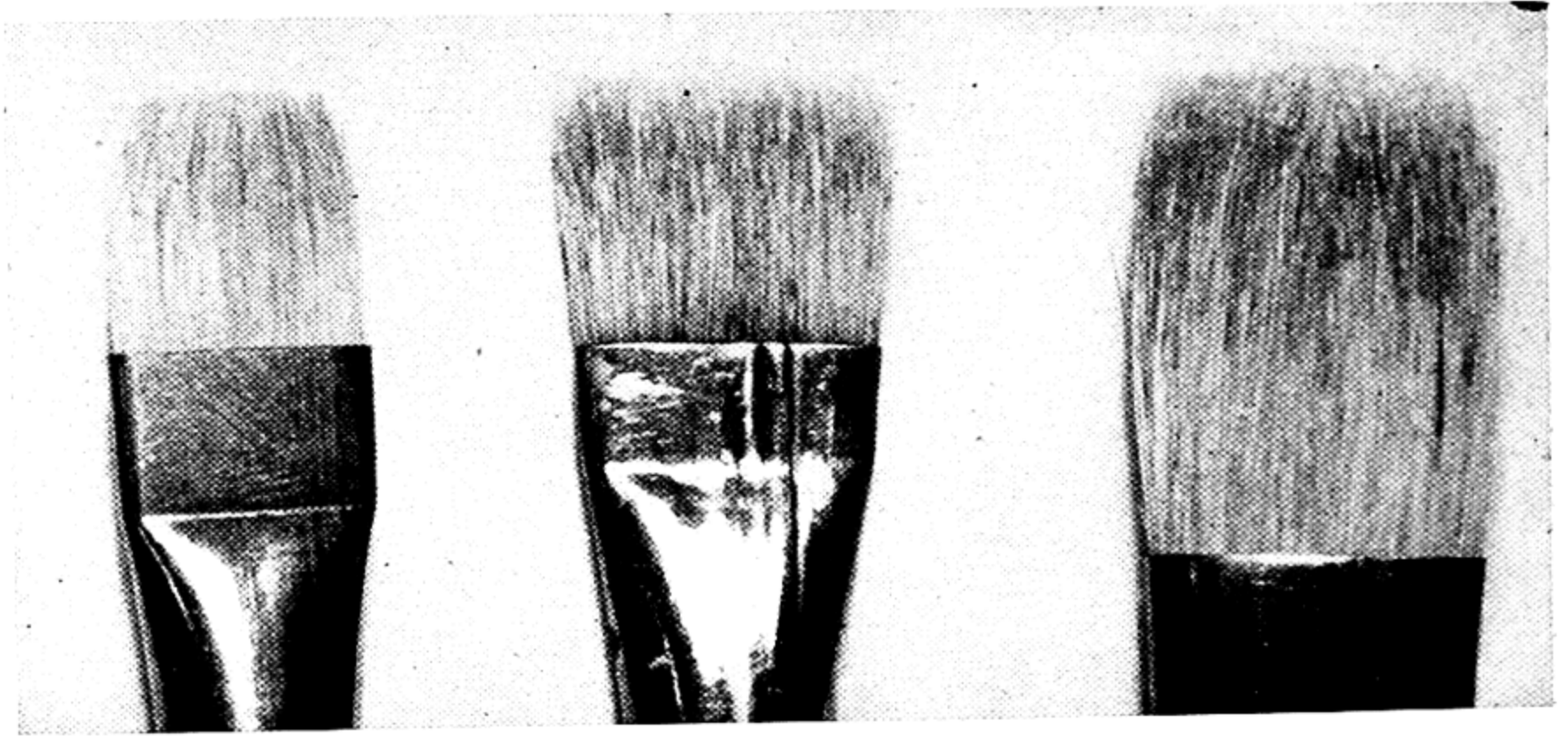


PLATE 3-A

Bristle brushes

- No. 1 Hair curved at the edges toward the center
- No. 2 Hair wider at the top than at the ferrule
- No. 3 Extra long bristles

of the best material and with them one can produce a controlled stroke. Next to it is a brush of cheaper make; the bristles are narrower at the ferrule and spreading at the tip. (As I have mentioned, the bristles of such a brush need not always be of inferior quality.)

*Mediocre
Brush*

We see on Plate 3-A that some brushes have long and some have short bristles. It is hard to say definitely which are preferable, because this depends ultimately on the habits of the painter. It should, however, be kept in mind that the longer, hence more flexible bristle hair, permits a more fluid stroke, while the shorter hair is appropriate for a more vigorous stroke.

*Different
Brushes—Dif-
ferent Brush
Strokes*

Here I should like to point out that the small short-hair bristle brushes, that is, smaller than No. 4, are practically useless.

There is no limit to the number of brushes one may wish to keep in readiness. There is, however, a minimum which the painter will need for free and unhampered work.

Three kinds of brushes will be used: flat bristle brushes, flat sable brushes, and round sable brushes. (The two latter are reproduced on Plate 3-B.)

Type of Hair

Bristle brushes should always be flat. Round bristle brushes serve no good purpose. The useful sizes of the flat bristle brushes are Nos. 4 to 12.

Bristle Brush

The necessary flat sable brushes range from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch width, and the round sable brushes are useful in all sizes. Instead of sable one can use brushes made of fitch hair. They are cheaper, nevertheless of good quality.

Sable Brush

Fitch Hair

Lastly, a utility brush such as is used for furniture painting, about one inch wide, will do for varnishing.

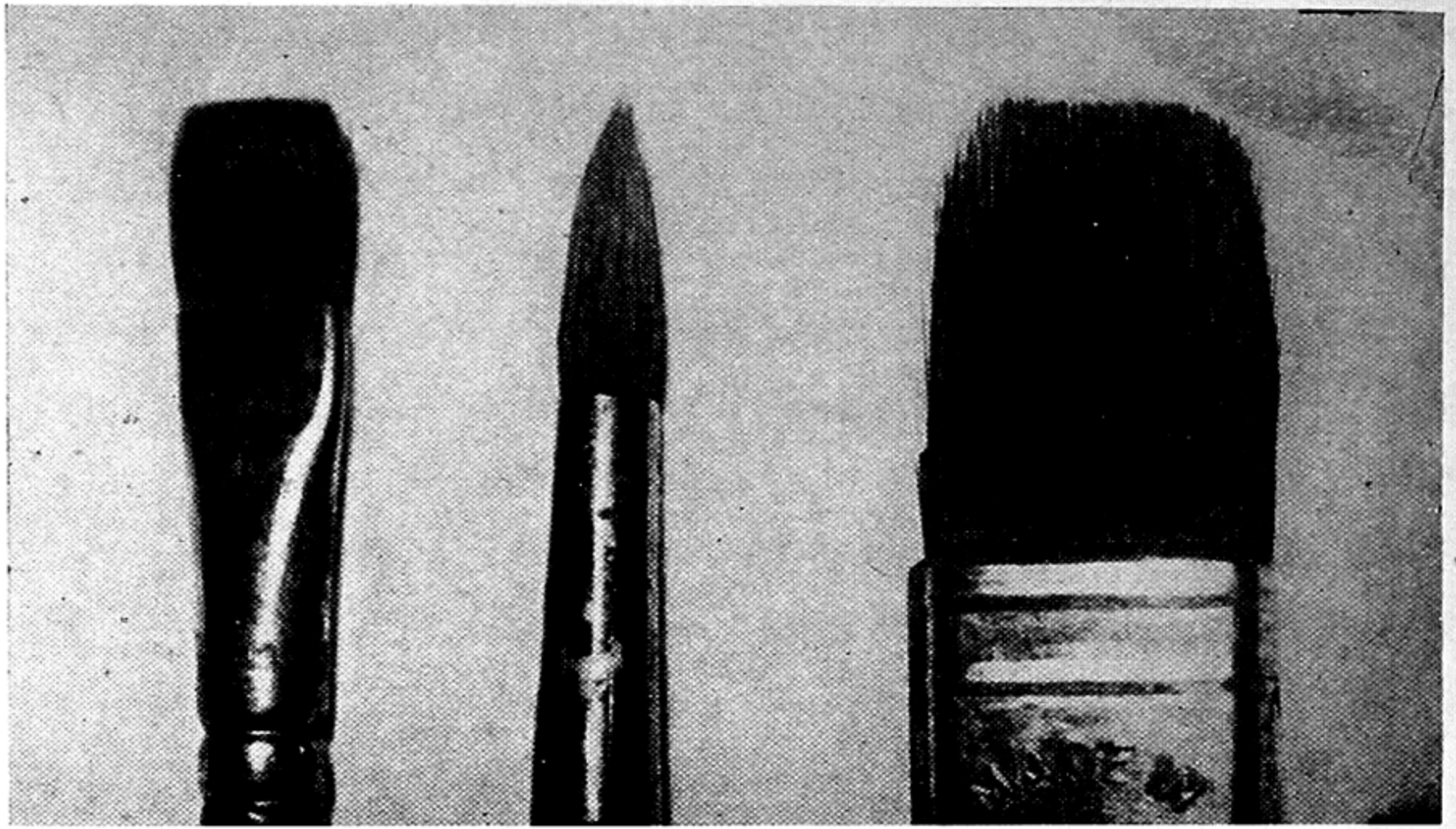


PLATE 3-B

No. 1 Flat sable brush

No. 2 Round sable brush

No. 3 Utility brush reduced to one-half of its normal thickness

*Characteristics
of Brushes*

The characteristic behavior of the various brushes is as follows:

Bristle brushes permit a vigorous, decisive stroke, and leave a strong brush-mark.

Flat sable brushes are responsible for a more delicate stroke and softer blending of paint.

Round sable brushes provide a fluent stroke and are best for delineations and draftsmanlike effects.

The advantage of the utility brush is the elasticity of the hair and the fact that it sheds varnish easily. However, such a brush is as a rule too thick. To reduce its thickness, cut some of the bristles at the ferrule, as seen on Plate 3-B. The thinner the layer of bristles, the more elastic the brush becomes.

Notes on Brushes and Their Preservation

One should never cut off the tips of brushes, for only the natural tips of the hair provide the ideal condition for painting.

*Don't Trim
Brushes*

Because the character of a brush is responsible for all kinds of effects in painting, one should pay great attention to the selection of a proper instrument.

A brush can be inferior because of many reasons. For example: too long bristles in relation to the width of the ferrule. Such a brush is weak, and does not respond properly to the painter's dictates.

Useless Brushes

Brushes which have become fuzzy through wear and tear are difficult to handle in instances where precision of the brush-stroke counts most, as in portrait painting. However, fuzzy brushes can be very useful in landscape or still life painting.

Brushes that have worn short can not very well be used for painting. Short bristles, because of their inelasticity, scrape paint off rather than deposit it onto the canvas. But for occasional wiping of paint

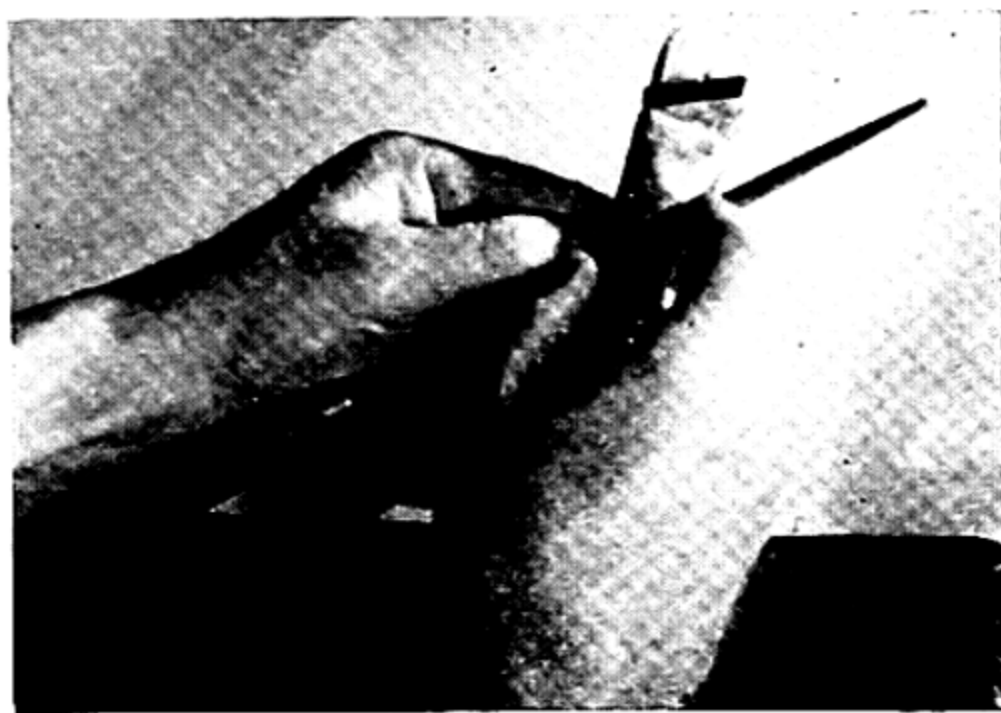


PLATE 4-A

Cutting off a piece of the ferrule to lengthen
bristles



PLATE 4-B

Lathering a brush on the palm of the hand

from certain areas of the canvas a stiff brush can be used to advantage.

Improving Brushes

A brush which has become too short can be improved in the following way (Plate 4-A): A piece of the ferrule should be cut off with a file; the hair which it covers will thus be exposed and an additional length of $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch added to the brush. The cement and the paint which clogs the uncovered hair should be dissolved with paint remover, and then washed away with soap and water.

A brush sometimes sheds hair, or, particularly in sable brushes, the hair may become brittle and break off. This condition can not be remedied, the brush becomes useless.

Washing Brushes

Washing brushes is demonstrated on Plate 4-B. First squeeze out with newspaper as much of the paint as possible, then use soap and water and give particular attention to removing all traces of paint,

not only from the tip of the brushes but from the neck as well. The lifetime of a brush depends chiefly on meticulous cleaning. All traces of soap must be rinsed off. Brushes must be permitted to dry with the hair pressed together. The delicate sable or soft-hair brushes especially must be carefully pressed to a point or to a flat shape—the original shape, whatever it is.

The Palette Knife

A palette knife is a very important painting tool, once a painter develops the habit of using it. On Plate 5-A the two necessary palette *Palette Knives*



PLATE 5-A

No. 1 Painting knife

No. 2 Underpainting

knives are represented. The chief difference between these knives is in their flexibility; blades can also be differently shaped depending on the painter's preference.

The knife used for final painting should have a blade of considerable flexibility; for underpainting a stiffer knife is desirable. (Also for scraping dry paint from the palette the blade should be quite rigid.) On Plate 5-B equal pressure has been applied to the knives illustrated, in order to bring the flat surface of the blade into contact with the canvas. On the first knife we see a good portion of the blade lying flat on the canvas; the same pressure has less effect on the second knife. In painting, sometimes only the edge of the knife is used; in such an instance a stiffer blade is more appropriate than a flexible one.

To understand the importance of a sufficiently flexible blade in

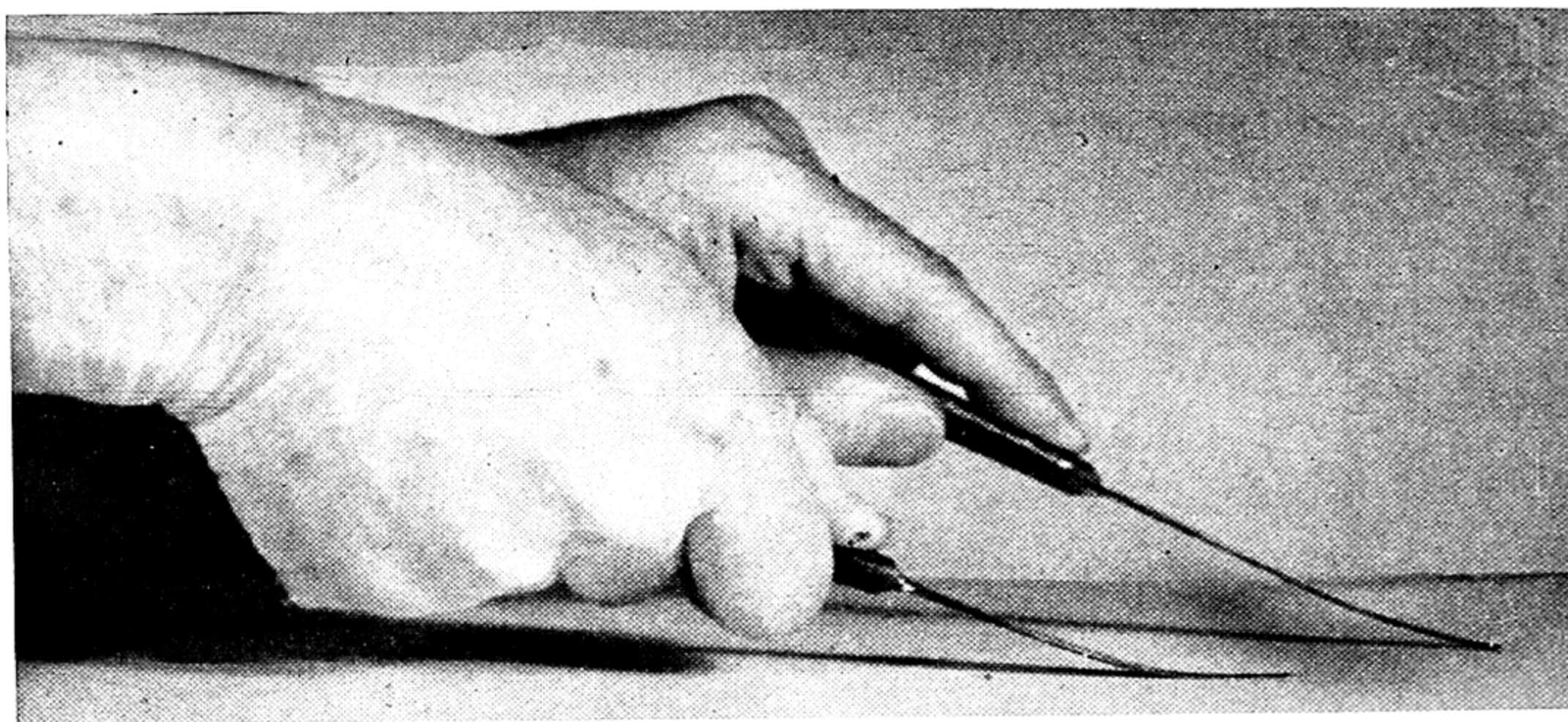


PLATE 5-B

Elasticity of painting (bottom) and underpainting (top) knives

*Elasticity of
Palette Knife
Blade*

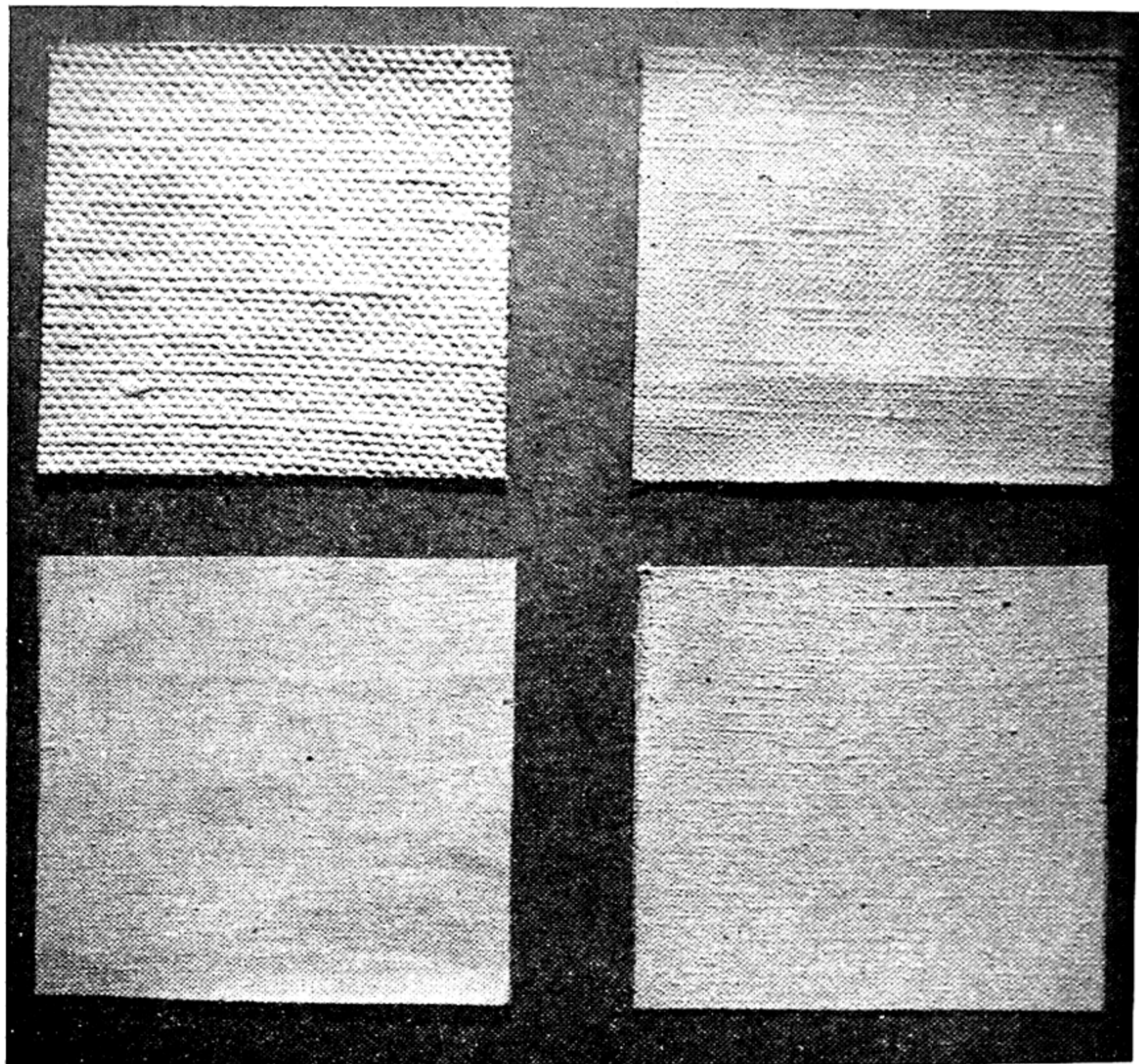
painting, consider that too much pressure does not make for an easy and free distribution of paint on the canvas, for excess of pressure squeezes the paint from underneath the blade.

In underpainting, heavier pressure on the blade is unobjectionable, because for this purpose a thin paintlayer showing no appreciable texture is, usually, desirable. Moreover, when underpainting, the interstices of the canvas ground should be filled with paint; a stiffer blade is more suitable for performing this task.

WHEN painting thinly, the characteristic of the fabric will be responsible for the appearance of the paint surface—the texture, in studio parlance. Therefore, choosing an appropriate support for a painting calls for great deliberation.

A

B



C

D

PLATE 6

Various grades of canvas

A Coarse-grained

B Double-primed

C Extra thin

D Cotton fabric

On Plate 6 four kinds of canvas are illustrated: A. Rather thick heavy, coarse-grained canvas. B. Double-primed canvas, slightly irregular grain. C. Thin, single-primed canvas. D. Cotton fabric single-primed.

These canvas types have certain virtues and faults. Canvas A is a high grade material having several disadvantages: first, the absolute regularity of the grain is unpleasant; second, the grain is so pronounced that it takes a great amount of paint to cover it up. The bother of preparatory work to make such a canvas agreeable to work on does not warrant its use. (All the over-rough fabrics have these disadvantages.)

Canvas B is the most practical: it is double-primed, which means that two coats of priming were used in the preparation of the painting ground. This makes the ground neither too rough nor too smooth. One may proceed to paint or underpaint on such a canvas without preliminaries.

Canvas C is suitable for small paintings, especially when painting thinly. If the grain of such a canvas feels a trifle sharp, it can be smoothed with a fine sandpaper. An extra smooth canvas, however, is not suitable for underpainting because whatever tooth exists will be entirely covered up by the underpainting, and painting on an over-smooth ground is rarely desirable. ("Tooth" is a slight roughness of the surface which promotes the adhesion of the next paint layer.) An oversmooth ground may also induce cracking of the paint film.

Fabric D is made of cotton. It is cheaper than the linen material but its surface is unpleasant because of the monotonously regular

grain. To improve such a canvas a second priming will have to be applied.

*Canvas-covered
Board*

Finally, there is canvas-covered board. It is a hard task to achieve good paint quality on this support because, as a rule, its surface is forbiddingly unattractive.

Painters' canvas comes in various widths; those of 36 to 42 inches are most economical. Wider or narrower canvas is disproportionately high in price.

*Presdwood
Panel*

Painters who wish to use a panel would do well to prepare it themselves. A popular material used today is known under the trade name Presdwood. (Also referred to as Masonite.) It can be bought in lumber yards and building material stores. The smooth side should be used for painting. The rough side has an ugly, pressed-in pattern; a painting never looks well on such a surface.

*Preparing a
Panel*

The preparation of a suitable painting ground on such a support is quite simple. First, the smooth surface should be roughened with a medium-coarse sandpaper; next, spray on with an atomizer (or brush on) several layers of fixative (each layer should be allowed to dry for a few minutes); finally, a quantity of white lead paint (tube paint or the cheaper grade sold in cans) should be thinned to a loose consistency with copal or retouching varnish and brushed on the panel thinly in parallel strokes. The brush-marks should be smoothed out by moving the flat sable brush crosswise (Plates 7-A & B). To cover the panel with an opaque layer of white, the same procedure should be repeated the next day. The panel is then allowed to dry for about a week or two. When siccative is used, overpainting can be carried out in three or four days (see page 25).

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PLATE 7-A

Priming presdwood board with white lead paint

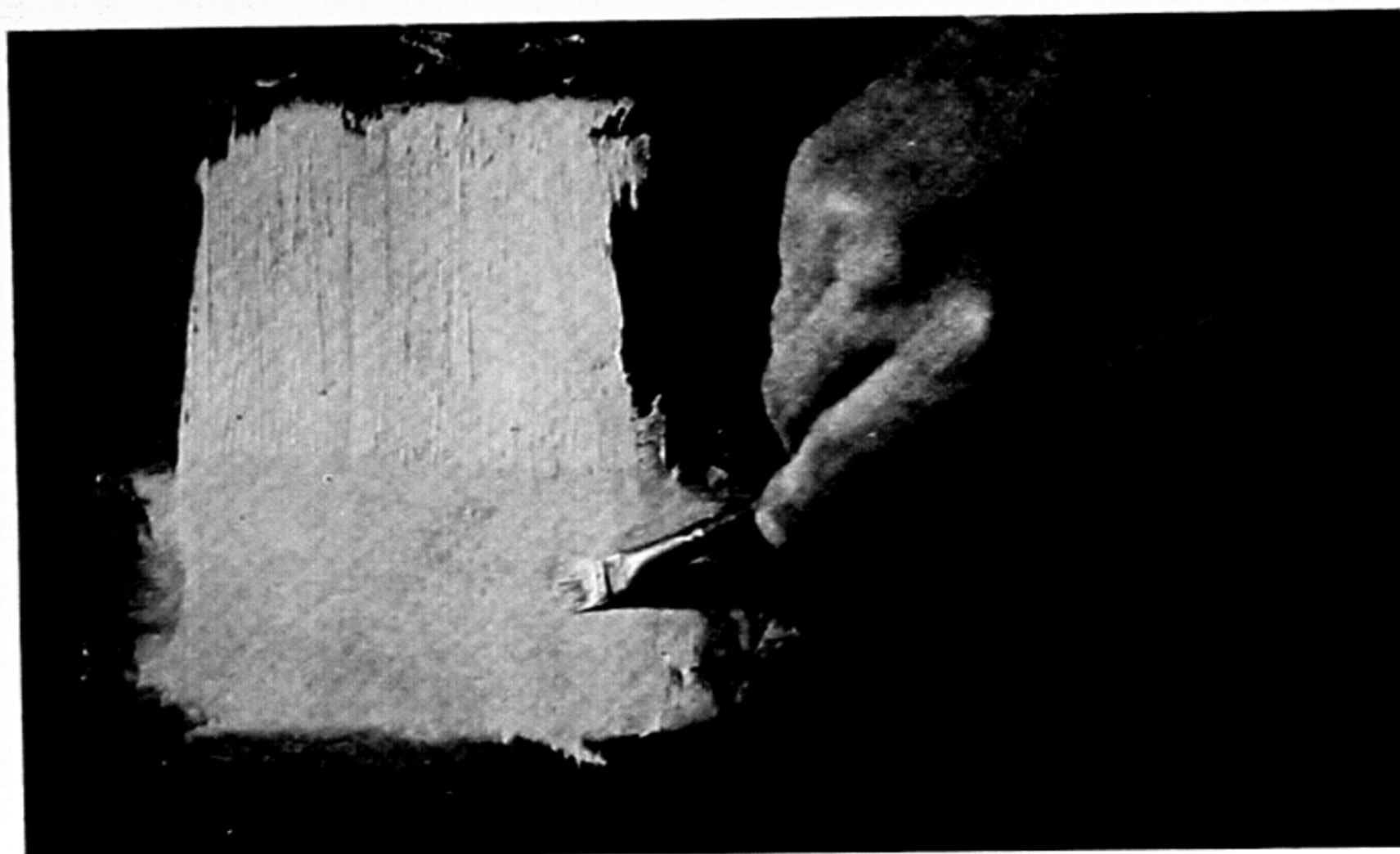


PLATE 7-B

Smoothing bristle brush marks with a sable brush

A

B

C



D

E

F

PLATE 8

Linseed oil, painting medium, varnish, turpentine, fixative, cobalt dryer

*Turpentine,
Varnolene*

(D) Represents the solvent turpentine or varnolene. The first is a natural product obtained from the sap of pine trees (as such it is referred to as *gum* turpentine) and the second is a refraction of

petroleum, also known under the trade names Texaco spirits and Sonoco spirits. Either of these solvents can be used for thinning the consistency of an oil medium or for dissolving a relatively fresh paint layer. A hardened paint film will require a stronger solvent. An addition of 20 to 50 per cent of benzene to varnolene or turpentine will make an effective paint remover. In extreme cases pure benzene can be used. (See page 91.)

Paint Remover

When dealing with these solvents, remember that turpentine, when kept in half-filled or open bottles oxidizes and thickens, whereupon it becomes unusable for our purposes, whereas varnolene does not undergo such changes—it merely evaporates.

*Oxidation of
Turpentine*

(E) Fixative is a thin solution of shellac in alcohol. When sprayed onto a canvas it “fixes” the drawing to it, and prevents its obliteration when painting over it. (As we remember, fixative is also used to isolate the roughened surface of a Presdwood panel or an illustration board. By this isolation the surface partially loses its absorbent qualities.)

Fixative

(F) Cobalt drier or siccative serves to accelerate the drying of paints. When added in very small quantities—1 drop to about 2 teaspoonfuls of painting medium and 1 drop to about 2 inches of paint as it comes from the tube—it will make thin paint layers dry in a period of hours. It is essential to mix the drier thoroughly with the medium and the paint.

*Cobalt Drier
(Siccative)*

CHAPTER V HOW TO STRETCH A CANVAS AND
MAKE IT READY FOR PAINTING

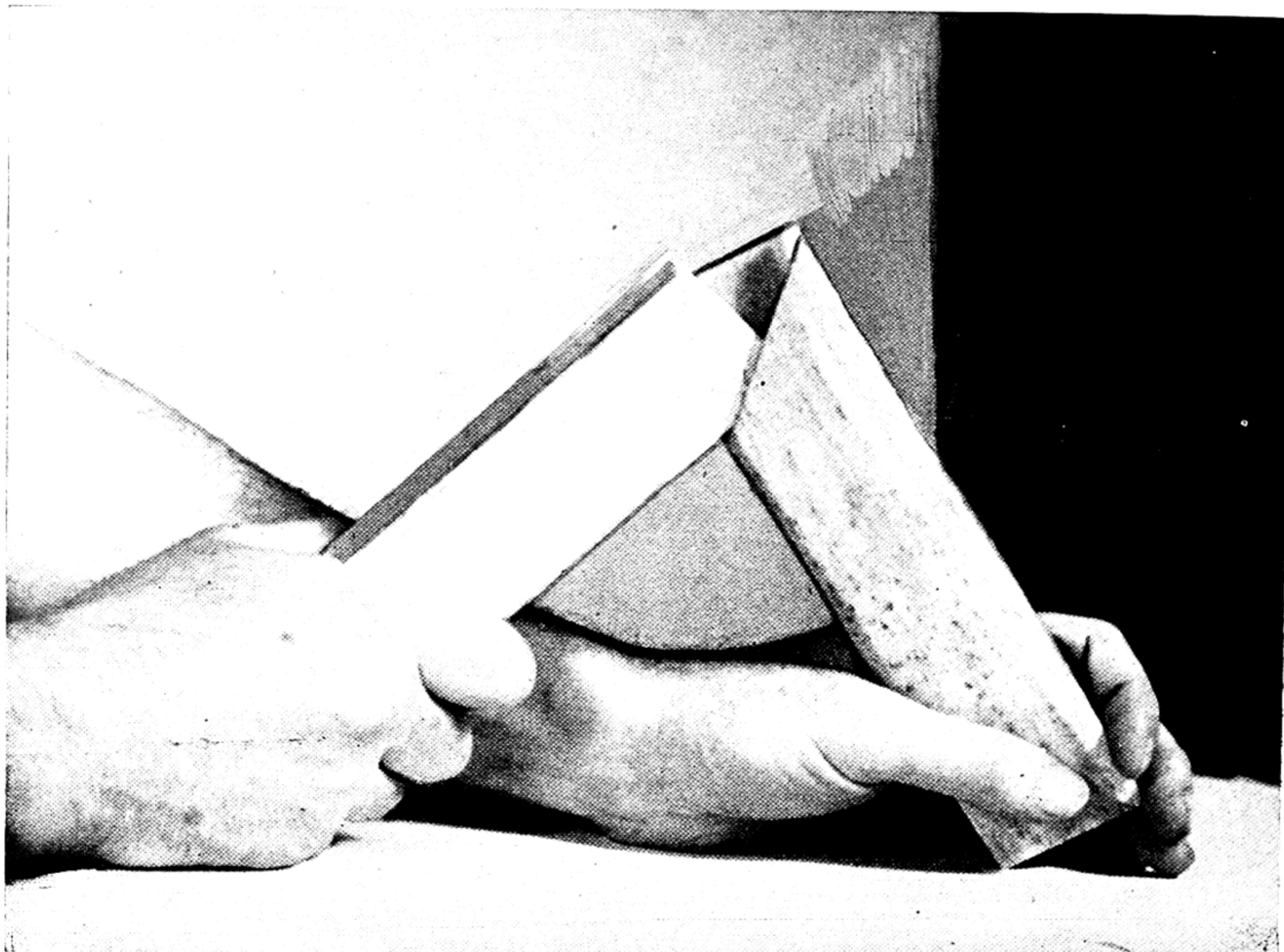


PLATE 9-A
Joining stretchers

*Stretching
Canvas*

It is more economical to buy canvas in rolls of six-yard length than ready-stretched.

To stretch a canvas, first join the stretcher bars, then test with a

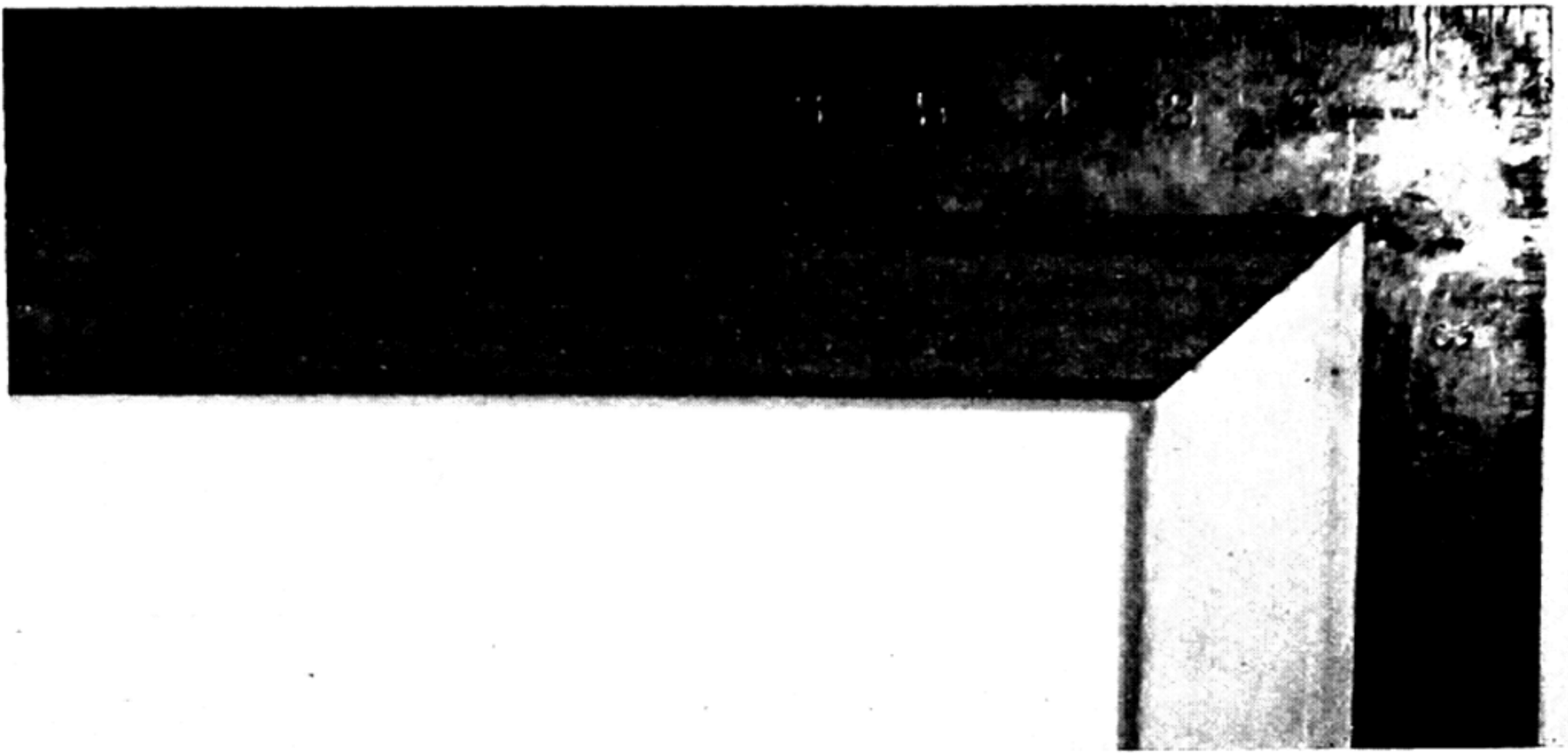


PLATE 9-B

Aligning stretchers with a square

carpenter's square to see that they are correctly aligned, otherwise the stretcher will not fit into the rabbet of the frame (Plates 9-A & B). Then cut the canvas larger all around by one inch than the stretcher size and nail it onto the side of the stretcher bar in the manner illustrated on Plate 10-A.

Figure A on Plate 10 demonstrates the first step in affixing the canvas; this is to nail it in the middle of the stretcher bar. For this purpose use upholstery tacks $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch long. Next pull the canvas taut toward one end of the stretcher bar and nail it down; do this on the other end and then hammer in more nails at a distance of about two inches apart. The same procedure should be followed on the opposite (parallel) stretcher bar but, in addition to the pull side-wise the canvas should be stretched taut across the bar.

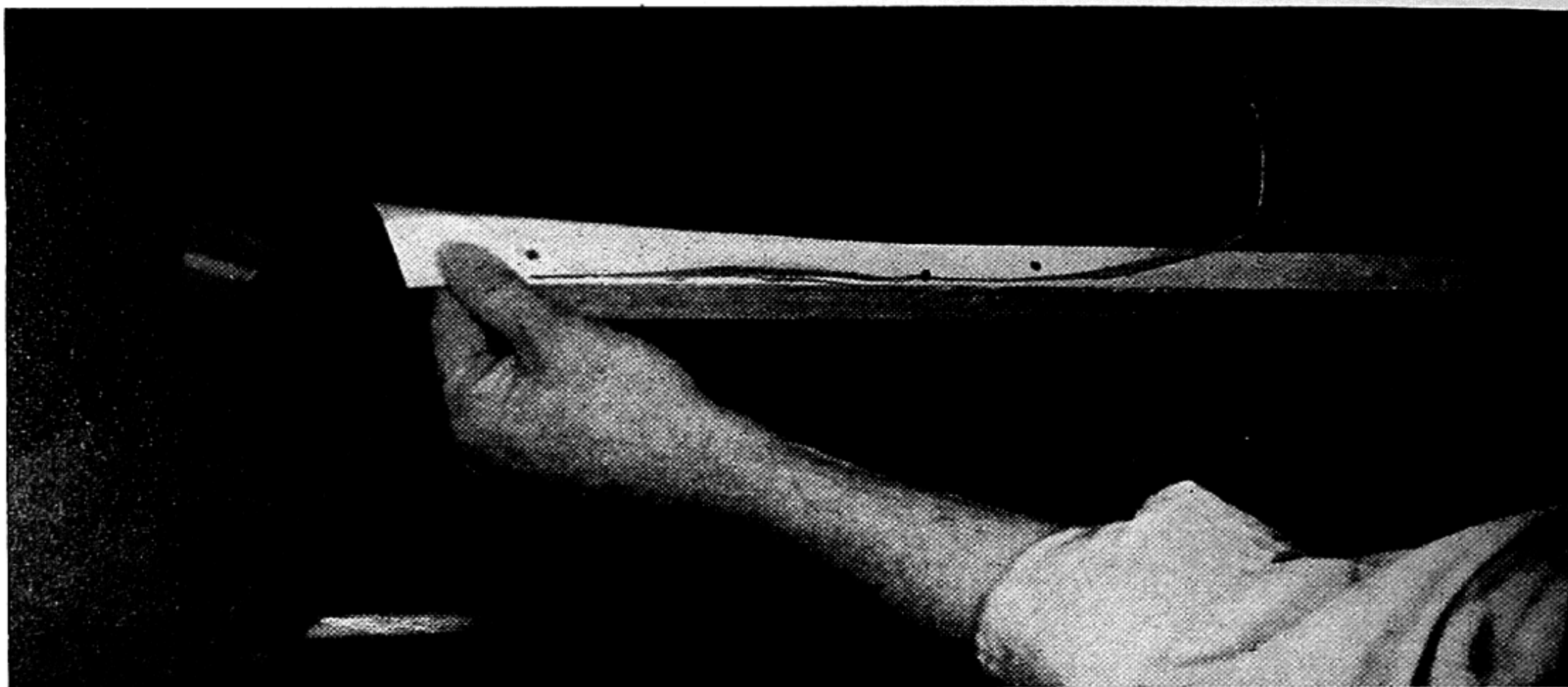


PLATE 10-A

First step—stretching a canvas

On the third and fourth stretcher bars the nails can be driven in one after another. There is no need to pull the canvas sideways as this has already been done twice before, but maximum pressure should be exerted to pull the canvas taut across the bars.

On Plate 10-B the folding of the canvas at the corners of the stretchers is demonstrated.

*Stretching
Canvas Taut*

After the canvas has been stretched in the manner described, one often finds that in spite of all efforts it is still not perfectly taut. To rectify the slackness of a canvas and do away with the folds which may have formed, wooden keys are placed in the grooves provided at the end of the stretcher bars (Plate 11-A).

Each stretcher corner should receive two keys. One key forces the



PLATE 10-B

Folding canvas at corners

bar away from its corresponding parallel bar and the other performs the same task for the adjoining bar. The keys should be hammered in gently, without undue force; to prevent them from falling out, nails should be placed in front of them (Plate 11-B).

It is important to have a perfectly stretched canvas when painting. Slack canvas does not respond well to the striking of the brush and also makes work with the palette knife more difficult. Moreover, the edge of the stretcher lying under the canvas will make a crease on it which will become quite disturbing to the appearance of the painting. Such creases may be forced up even on a well-stretched canvas

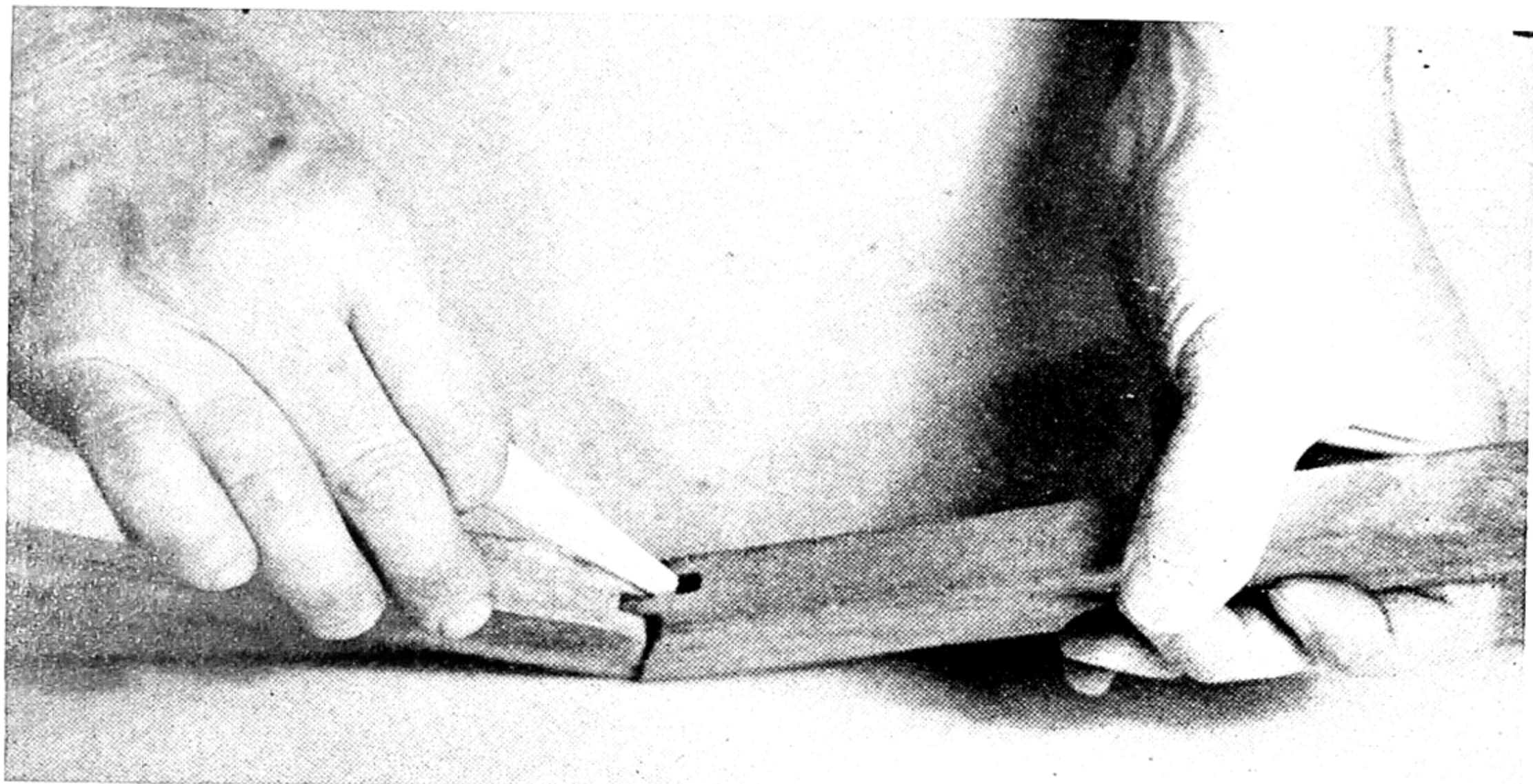


PLATE 11-A
Placing keys in grooves

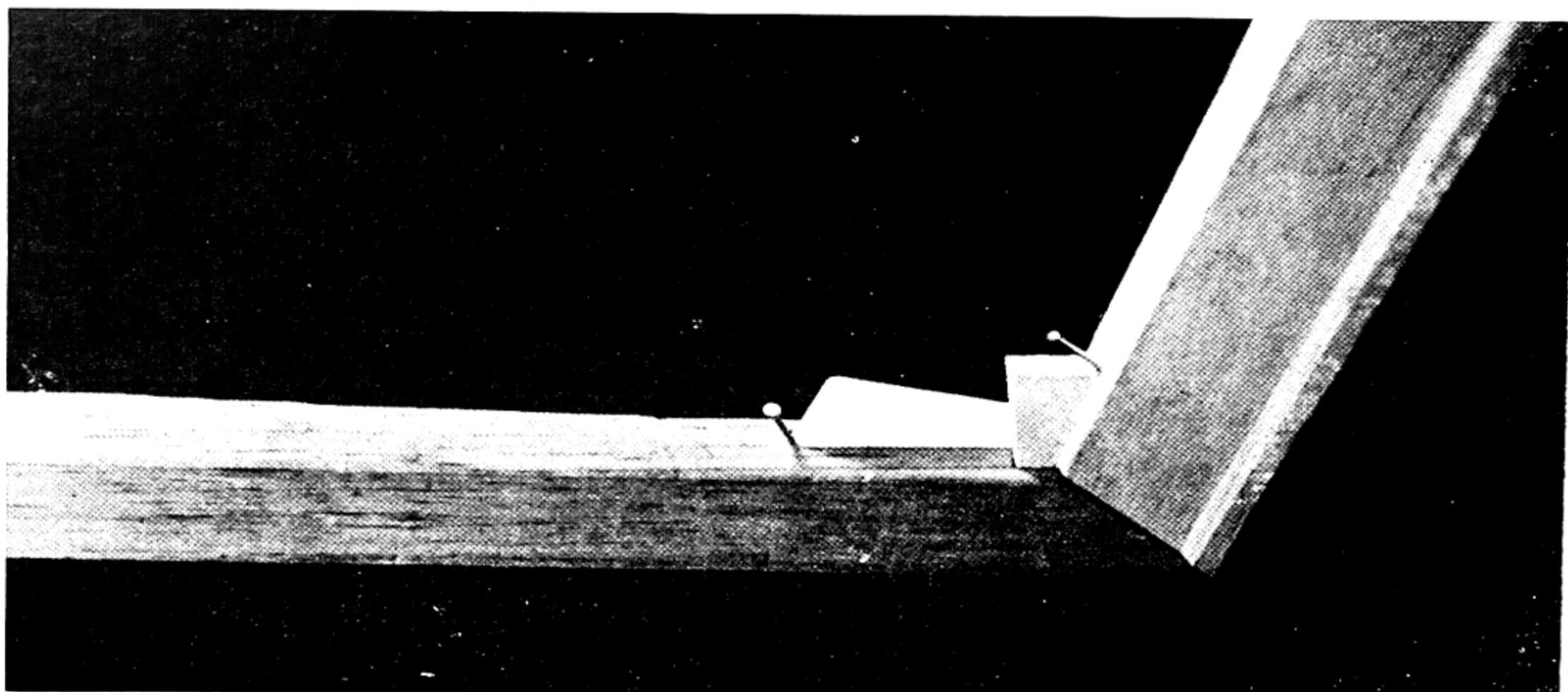


PLATE 11-B
Securing keys in place

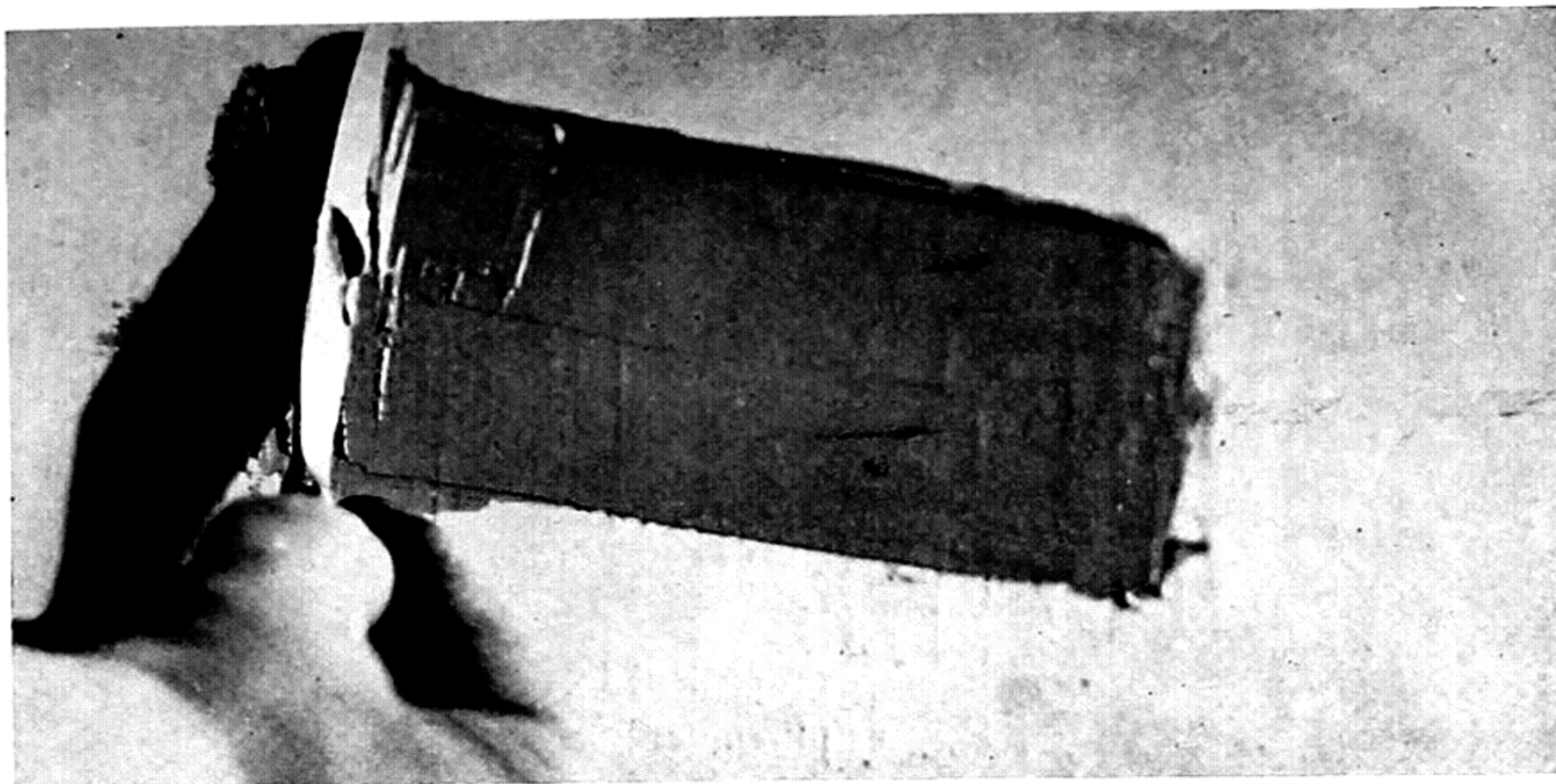


PLATE 12-A

Priming canvas with a palette knife

when working hard on it. Therefore, to prevent these ugly marks, it is advisable to insert a cardboard between the canvas and the stretcher bars during the time of painting.

Canvases having medium-smooth grain can be used for painting without any preliminaries. Canvases which seem too coarse can often be improved by sandpapering. Should this prove to be of no avail, a rough canvas should receive priming with white lead paint (Plates 12-A & B). This is done with a stiffer palette knife, which forces the paint into the interstices of the canvas. A cotton fabric will in most cases need such priming in order to cover up its ugly texture.

*Sandpapering
Canvas*

*Re-priming
Rough Canvas*

It is important to apply the paint evenly and thinly and to scrape

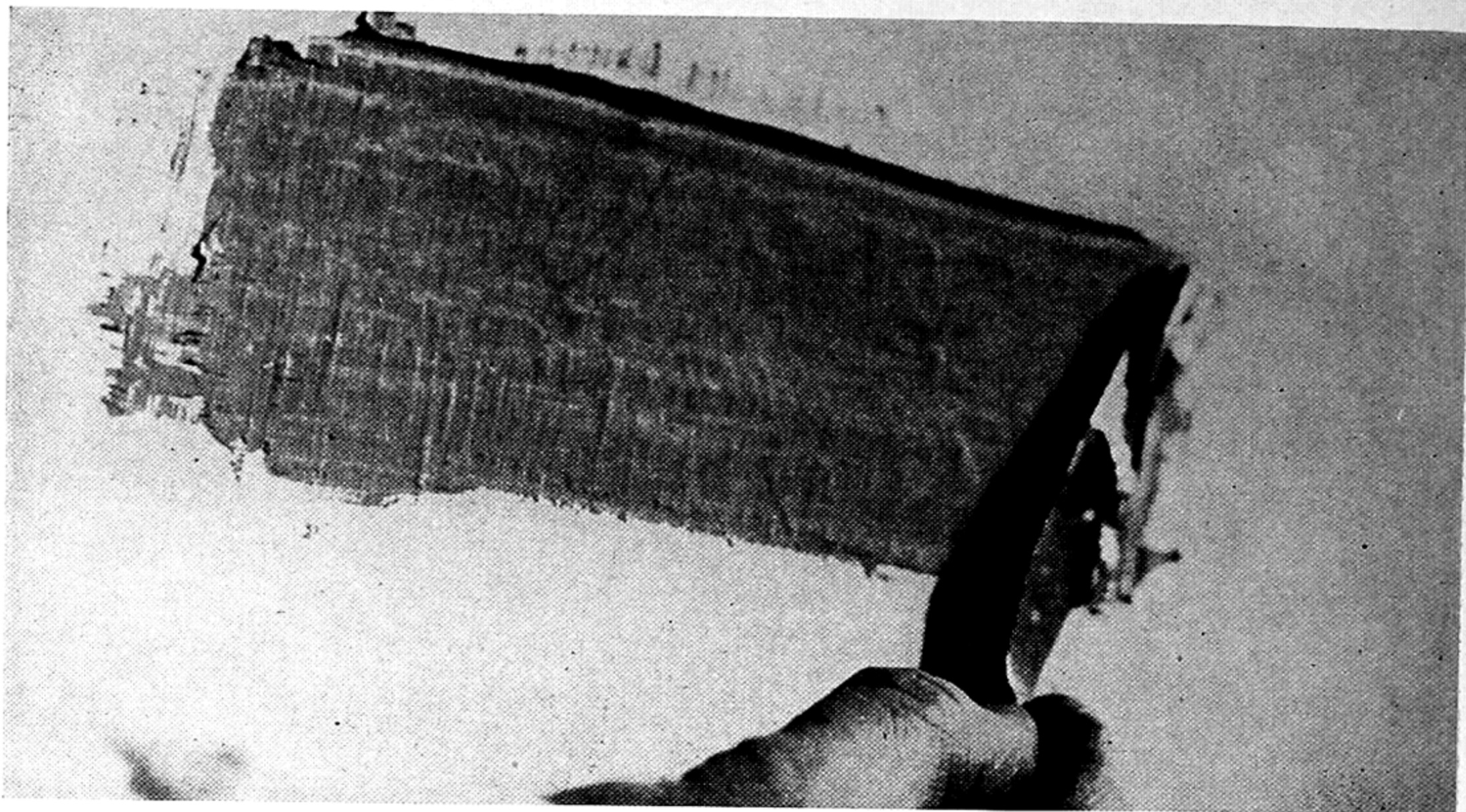


PLATE 12-B

Scraping off surplus of paint

off all surplus paint (Plate 12-B). White lead used for this purpose should be thinned to a somewhat loose consistency with copal or retouching varnish. Also, a drop of cobalt siccative can be added to every two teaspoonfuls of paint in order to make it dry overnight.

CHAPTER VI OIL PAINTS AND THEIR BEHAVIOR IN PAINTING

TO AVOID confusion in the choice of colors we shall limit ourselves here to the narrowest range; by understanding the nature of colors endless combinations can be obtained with a few colors.

*Economy in
Choice of Colors*

First let us consider what grade of colors the amateur painter should buy—the cheap or the more expensive kind? What make? Let me say here that most of the American-made paints produced by reputable firms are good, and the best of them are just as good or better than the imported ones.

*Quality of Com-
mercial Paints*

The following will comprise our selection of colors (although they have already been mentioned on page 3, I repeat them here): White lead, viridian green, ultramarine, prussian blue, naples yellow, yellow ochre, cadmium yellow, cadmium red, venetian red, burnt sienna, burnt umber, alizarin crimson, ivory black.

List of Colors

Let us now discuss each of these paints separately.

White lead, also known as *flake white*, is an opaque paint. It can be used as sold in cans; especially in underpainting this quality is entirely satisfactory. It is reasonable to buy white lead in one-pound tubes, as this paint is used more than all the other colors put together. The tube color yields a somewhat whiter paint than the canned variety. Also, the canned white lead is often too stiff. To make it brushable add a small quantity of linseed oil and mix it thoroughly with a palette knife.

White Lead

We shall work with two blue colors only. *Ultramarine blue* has a

Blue Colors

violet cast and is quite transparent. It is a mild color, that is, it does not possess great tinting capacity and depth as compared with our second color, *prussian blue*, which has extraordinary tinctorial power. A small addition of prussian blue suffices to change radically all the other colors or color combinations. The greenish cast of this color is especially valuable in landscape painting. Its excellent drying capacity must also be noted.

Viridian Green

Viridian green is the only unmixed green. All other green tints result from mixtures of two different colors. This highly transparent green, when used without admixture of other colors, is effective chiefly as a glaze, that is, in a thin transparent application. When used thickly it loses its intrinsic color value.

Yellow Colors

Our three yellow colors are *naples yellow*—a pale, mild yellow most useful in landscape painting. *Light ochre*—one of the important earth colors—is a moderately opaque dull yellow, and *cadmium yellow* is a brilliant yellow, moderately opaque and slow-drying. Cadmium yellow should always be of good quality. If its tinctorial capacity is lowered, cadmium yellow (and cadmium red as well) becomes practically worthless.

Red Colors

The two red colors are the counterpart of the yellows. The first, *venetian red* (light red) is, like ochre, an earth color. It is an opaque, powerful brick red. The second is the glowing, fiery *cadmium red*.

Brown Colors

Next enter our two brown colors—*burnt sienna* and *burnt umber*. Both are earth colors and quite important on the palette. The first, although rather dull in thick layers, when used in watercolor fashion, that is, greatly diluted with the medium, will appear fiery. The second is a dark, dull brown, of particularly rich hue. It is not only

very useful from a coloristic point of view, but also because of its tendency to dry fast and to accelerate the drying of all the other colors mixed with it. Raw umber is a lighter variety of this color.

Alizarin crimson is our purple color. It is quite transparent, very slow-drying, and its use is limited. Valuable chiefly in still life painting, for draperies, etc., it is generally abused by the beginner who, attracted by the brilliant hue, makes a far too extensive use of it.

*Alizarin
Crimson*

Our last color is *ivory black*, a slow-drying paint of considerable strength. It can be used pure and in mixtures with all the other colors. The only practical disadvantage in using ivory black pure is its slow-drying capacity. This, however, can be improved by a small addition of umber, which will greatly accelerate its drying, without markedly changing its hue.

Ivory Black

The colors described can be divided into two categories—the blues and the greens are referred to as *cold colors* because they suggest the colors of water, ice, and the atmosphere. The yellows and the reds suggest fire and are therefore called *warm colors*. Intermediate colors such as brown, for example, will be cold or warm depending on the predominance of either bluish-greenish or reddish tints. What these qualities mean in painting is described in Part II, Chapter IV—*Landscape Painting*.

*Cold Colors—
Warm Colors*

Color Mixtures

As already mentioned, *white* can be mixed with all the other colors. Let us see here what tone it will produce when combined with the rest of the palette:

*White in Mix-
tures with Other
Colors*

*Black in Mix-
tures with Other
Colors*

With *viridian green*—an opaque cool bluish green of delicate hue.
With *ultramarine*—a slightly violet blue of a rather sweet tone.
With *prussian blue*—a cold, sharp blue, greenish in cast.
With *ochre*—a lighter, more opaque yellow.
With *cadmium yellow*—a brighter and paler yellow.
With *cadmium red*—a cool, bright, sweet pink.
With *venetian red*—a neutral dull pink.
With *burnt sienna*—a brownish dull pink.
With *umber*—a dull gray-brown.
With *alizarin crimson*—a sharp, opaque purple.
With *black*—a cool gray.

Black will produce the following tints in mixtures with other colors:

With *viridian green*—a dark green.
With *ultramarine blue*—a dark, semi-transparent blue.
With *prussian blue*—an intense blue-black.
With *ochre*—a dull green.
With *cadmium yellow*—an intense green.
With *cadmium red*—a dark red.
With *venetian red*—a dull brown-red.
With *burnt sienna*—a dark brown.
With *umber*—a black-brown.
With *alizarin crimson*—the deepest purple-black.

*Mixing Green
Tints*

Green tints can be obtained from mixtures of cadmium yellow or ochre with either of these colors—viridian, ultramarine, prussian, umber, black.

*Mixing Pink
Tints*

Pink tints—all the red colors in mixtures with white will yield

pink. Naples yellow or ochre can be added to brighten up the hue of pink.

Blue tints—ultramarine and prussian blue in mixtures with white. A gray-blue can be obtained by adding umber to this combination and green-blue when umber is substituted for ochre. A violet-blue will result from mixture of ultramarine blue and red. The blue colors can also be influenced toward cool nuances by admixtures of viridian and toward warm nuances by admixtures of burnt sienna.

*Mixing Blue
Tints*

Bright red and orange will be produced by mixtures of cadmium yellow and cadmium red, also venetian red and cadmium yellow. A fiery red can be obtained by adding cadmium yellow to alizarin crimson. To dull or deepen red, mix cadmium red or venetian red with black or umber. Burnt sienna can also be used for this purpose, although it is much less effective than the former.

*Mixing Red
Tints*

Brown tints can be mixed from burnt sienna, ochre and black; umber and ochre; black and burnt sienna.

*Mixing Brown
Tints, Gray
Tints*

Gray tints—white, blue, umber; white, umber, viridian; white and black; white and umber; white, venetian red, viridian green.

Purple—alizarin crimson will turn to various hues of intense bluish purple in mixtures with white and blue colors. A certain mauve tone will be produced when mixing alizarin crimson with viridian and white.

*Mixing Purple
Tints*

How To Use Colors

The tonal value of a color mixture will result not only from the choice of certain colors, but also from the manner of mixing them. One should be aware that the more thoroughly the colors become in-

*Obtaining Dull
Colors*

termixed, the duller their effect will be. The reason for this is that the different color particles become regularly interspersed throughout the mass of paint. Housepainters' paints are such thorough mixtures of two or more colors. Of course, dull tints are often used in painting. In fact, in some instances they may become very important. But the painter should be conscious of the fact that equal quantities of identical colors will produce entirely different effects depending on the manner in which the mixture is handled—whether the colors were blended with a few strokes of brush or palette knife, or whether a lot of effort went into mixing them.

*Lively Color
Effects*

Mixtures of color can often be produced directly on the canvas. For example, instead of mixing black and ochre on the palette and then transferring the mixture to the canvas, black may be applied to the canvas first and then ochre brushed into it, or vice versa. Thus by different manipulations, different tonal effects can be produced (see Exercise 1, pages 46–47).

Especially, colors mixed directly on the canvas with the palette knife may produce very lively effects (see Exercise 2, page 47).

*Mix Only Few
Colors Together*

When mixing colors, it is important to develop a habit of using as few colors as possible. Mixtures which exceed three colors in addition to white are, in most cases, the result of haphazard groping and rarely of planful choosing. Of course, it is hardly possible to remember row upon row of combinations of four or more colors, and to use them whenever the occasion arises. When asking a painter how he achieved this or that color combination, it is quite common to hear the answer—"I don't remember—how did I ever get this effect?" Now, it is quite all right to produce interesting coloristic effects in a

trance, as it were, but since we can not conjure up a trance whenever the need for obtaining a particular color combination arises, it is best to develop a habit which rests on a more methodical procedure.

Another important consideration is to keep always in mind a few principal rules of color behavior. For example: If a color scheme appears to be too blue, the best means of neutralizing blue is to add umber, which will gray it down. Or, should a green appear to be too vivid—white will cut its intensity (see Exercise 3, page 48).

*Neutralizing
Colors*

Burnt sienna or venetian red will also have a neutralizing effect on green. In other words, red always neutralizes green and when white is added to the green-red combination a gray tone will result (see Exercise 3, page 48).

*Red and Green
Combination*

When the addition of white to a color combination containing black is contemplated, one should previsualize a graying of the color scheme, because the new color—white—added to black, will turn it a strong gray.

*Behavior of
Color Mixtures*

Whenever alizarin crimson is used with other colors, one should realize that an intermixture of white will unavoidably bring out a bilious purple.

It follows from the above that some colors, even when mixed with other colors to the point where their presence can not be visually detected *do not lose their identity*—an addition of a catalytic color, if I may borrow a term, will reveal their presence.

Furthermore, the strength or tinting capacity of a color, as it is known, should be well weighed when considering mixtures of certain colors. For example: A small addition of a weak color such as viridian green will not have the power to change radically a combina-

Tinting Strength

tion of strong colors. Whereas, even a small addition of a powerful color such as venetian red or prussian blue will swallow up a weak color ensemble (see Exercise 5, pages 48–49).

*White-Red,
White-Blue*

White color will never lighten a red color or a combination of red colors; on the contrary, it will dull such colors by turning them pink. Blue colors, on the other hand, can be easily lightened with white and will not lose their intrinsic color. In fact, ultramarine or prussian blue mixed with white will appear more intensely blue.

*Quick—Slow-
Drying Colors*

As noted before, some colors have a tendency to dry quickly and some to dry slowly. The following colors are the fastest driers: umber, prussian blue, burnt sienna. The following colors dry well: white lead, ultramarine, naples yellow, ochre, venetian red, viridian green. And the slow drying colors are: cadmium red, cadmium yellow, alizarin crimson, ivory black.

*Influencing
Drying Time of
Colors*

Of course, when colors are intermixed, the drying time will be altered. Even the smallest addition of umber will speed up the drying rate of a slow-drying color. This is important to remember when underpainting.

*Occasional De-
ficiency of Tube
Paint*

And now a word on the commercial tube paints. In spite of all the precautions which the manufacturer takes to make the paint behave in tubes, a paint will sometimes change its consistency. It may become too thin or too stiff. A thin paint, that is, a paint which is too rich in oil, can be freed from the oil surplus by squeezing it onto an absorbent paper such as newspaper or a paper towel, for example. Too stiff paint can be improved by adding linseed oil and working it in with a stiff palette knife.

PART II

THE PRACTICE OF PAINTING

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CHAPTER I TRACING THE DRAWING ONTO THE CANVAS

I HAVE heard of painters who fearlessly approach a canvas and express their intention on its immaculate surface without any preliminaries. I have heard of painters who start on a painting at the upper left-hand corner, proceed diagonally across the surface, and end up with their signature on the lower right-hand corner. Some others, so I have been told, start to draw a figure by delineating first an ear lobe and progressing from there on. This is all possible. Some abilities take curious ways. In my own long practice, however, developing a composition directly on the canvas has never been feasible. Not only do I have to revise my original plan repeatedly, but also—quite often—the entire composition has to be eventually moved one or more inches to the right or left or up or down on the canvas. If all these changes had to be carried out on the canvas, the fabric would be a wreck before the brush ever touched it.

So, for the painter who would rather sketch on a thin tracing paper (so-called detail paper) before committing himself to the canvas, I give the following advice: Place the tracing paper on the canvas; attach it to the top of the stretcher with thumb tacks, then develop your composition on it with charcoal. The transfer of this drawing to the canvas is made with a transfer paper. This transfer paper can be made in a simple fashion by rubbing into a piece of the detail paper (16 x 20 inches in size, or thereabouts) a dark colored—preferably red or brown—pastel crayon. Graphite or dry pigment can also be

*Advantage of
Drawing on
Paper First*

*Preparing Tran-
fer Paper*

used for this purpose. In case a pastel crayon is not at hand, a piece of charcoal can be used to make a suitable transfer paper, but a paper prepared in this manner is not lasting. Commercial transfer paper (so-called carbon paper) should not be used, because it contains an aniline dye which has the tendency to strike through even a heavy paint layer.

*Tracing of
Drawings*

The actual tracing is carried out by going over the drawing's contours with a pencil or with a pointed instrument such as the handle of a brush. There is no need to trace all the details of a drawing. Only



GRAPH NO. 1

Drawing traced to a canvas

the main outlines should be considered, as demonstrated on the reproduction on page 44.

The next step is to "fix" the drawing which has been transferred to the canvas so that it will not come off when brought into contact with oil paints. This is done by spraying the drawing lightly with fixative, which binds the loose particles of the pastel crayons, charcoal, etc.

EXERCISES 1 to 5 should be carried out on areas of about 10 or 15 inches square. The paint field into which the colors are brushed must be wet, so as to permit a free intermixture of colors. Only one color should be brushed in at a time—lightly, with but few strokes (see also pages 37–38, *How To Use Colors*).

EXERCISE NO. 1—*Mixing Paint Directly on the Canvas*

Black field

Brush into this color field: (a) white (b) ochre (c) cadmium yellow (d) cadmium red (e) venetian red.

White field

Brush into this color field: (a) prussian blue (b) viridian green (c) ultramarine (d) ochre (e) cadmium yellow (f) cadmium red (g) venetian red (h) burnt sienna (i) burnt umber (j) black (k) alizarin crimson.

Ochre field

Brush into this color field: (a) viridian green (b) prussian blue (c) ultramarine (d) cadmium red (e) burnt sienna (f) umber (g) black.

Cadmium yellow field

Brush into this color field: (a) viridian green (b) ultramarine (c) prussian blue

(d) cadmium red (e) venetian red (f) burnt sienna (g) burnt umber (h) black (i) alizarin crimson.

Cadmium red field

Brush into this color field: (a) viridian green (b) prussian blue (c) umber (d) black (e) alizarin crimson.

Burnt sienna field

Brush into this color field: (a) viridian green (b) ultramarine (c) prussian blue (d) ochre (e) cadmium yellow (f) umber (g) black.

Burnt umber field

Brush into this color field: (a) prussian blue (b) ultramarine (c) ochre (d) cadmium yellow (e) cadmium red (f) venetian red.

EXERCISE NO. 2—*Applying Colors with a Palette Knife*

Take up from the palette without mixing the indicated groups of colors; apply them to the canvas and mix them briefly by moving the palette knife in several directions: (a) viridian green, ultramarine, white (b) prussian blue, ochre, white (c) prussian blue, cadmium yellow, white (d) prussian blue, umber, white (e) ochre, black, white (f) cadmium yellow, black, white (g) black, white (h) black, ochre (i) black, cadmium yellow.

EXERCISE NO. 3—*Neutralizing (Graying) of Colors*

Venetian
Red field

(a) Mix into this color field: green (cadmium yellow and prussian blue) until the red is neutralized. Next add white to gray it.

Pink field

(b) Mix into this color field: viridian green mixed with white.

Blue field
(Ultramarine or prussian blue and white)

(c) Mix into this color field: umber or umber and white.

Green field
(Cadmium yellow, and prussian blue, or ultramarine blue, and white)

(d) Mix into this color field: burnt sienna, or burnt sienna and white.

EXERCISE NO. 4—*Mixing White into the Following Color Combinations*

(a) A thorough mixture of alizarin crimson and ultramarine or alizarin crimson and burnt sienna (b) a thorough mixture of black and ochre.

EXERCISE NO. 5—*Influencing Weak Tints with Powerful Colors*

(a) Add to a mixture of viridian green, ultramarine and white, a

trace of venetian red (b) add to a mixture of viridian, ochre and white, a trace of prussian blue.

(The suggested color combinations and exercises are only a few of the endless variations to which the colors lend themselves.)

When learning to read or write, it is customary (or at least it was customary when I went to grammar school) to teach the pupils the alphabet first. In learning to play the piano, I understand that finger exercises are primary requirements before one tries his hand at a difficult piece. It is, therefore, a not too far-fetched idea to suggest that exercises in color and paint manipulation should be practised independently of painting pictures. Of course, it is not necessary to sacrifice yards upon yards of expensive canvas for such exercises. Illustration board or paper will answer just as well for this purpose. (To make paper suitable for painting with oil colors, see page 22).

*Color Exercises
on Paper*

*Underpainting
Definition*

WHAT is an underpainting? What purpose does it serve? Do all painters use an underpainting? These are the principal questions posed to me by practically all beginners.

The answer to the first question is: One or several layers of paint underlying the final, that is, the top paint layer is referred to as an underpainting. When used purposefully, the underpainting should influence the appearance of the painting. It is well to remember here that, when used thinly, even opaque paints are not entirely opaque, hence they will to some extent reveal the nature of the underlying color.

*Purposeful—
Accidental
Underpainting*

An underpainting is not always purposeful, sometimes it is merely an *unsatisfactory* painting which has received on top of it a corrective paint layer. Since a painting rarely succeeds at the first try, we can safely say that all painters underpaint—some purposefully and some unwittingly. Of these two procedures, it is evident that the first makes more sense. However, I must say here that sometimes unpremeditated effects can be quite intriguing. In the matter of creation, it appears, we cannot stretch out our control to all the recesses of the unconscious mind.

Besides the task of influencing the final painting, an underpainting does away with the forbiddingly cold white of the canvas, a white which can be very disturbing, when one is deciding on the final color scheme. Moreover, it is obvious that white paint applied to a white canvas will fail in its purpose, namely, it will not communicate it-

self to the beholder as incisively as will a white color passage applied to a colored ground.

An underpainting can be prepared from one color painted all over the surface of the white canvas; in such an instance we speak of a *toned ground*. The color of a toned ground can be light pink (white lead and some venetian red), light gray (white lead, prussian blue, and umber), or light yellow (white lead and yellow ochre). It is important to keep the toned grounds in *pale, pastel-like* hues, because painting on a darker ground often entails difficulties.

Toned grounds can be used for all types of work—landscapes, still life, or portraits. As a rule, the gray or pink-colored grounds are best for all occasions, but it is up to the painter to judge which color is more suitable for his particular purpose.

However, there is one exception where the use of an underpainting (or toned ground) is not desirable, namely, when painting directly from nature. Painting from nature demands quick procedure; weighty deliberation is hardly possible when facing fleeting light effects, effects which can be changed by the movement of a single cloud. (The subject of painting outdoors directly on white canvas is discussed on page 58.)

Certain principles should be kept in mind when choosing a particular ground to paint upon. Let us assume that the motif is made up of houses, masonry and the like, of predominantly gray color. Here the choice of a gray-toned ground would be inappropriate, because gray color would naturally not be effective on a gray ground. It should always be kept in mind that a top color will in most instances be enhanced when executed on contrasting color. The use of contrast-

*Toned Ground
—a Type of
Underpainting*

*Sketching from
Nature*

*Underpainting
in Contrasting
Colors*

ing colors can be especially effective when the top color is applied thinly.

*Toned Grounds
Ready for Use*

Since, for the reason given, painting is rarely done directly on white canvas, it is a good habit to keep toned canvases in various colors and sizes ready for use. A stock of ready-colored canvases obviates waiting for the drying of a ground before a painting can be started.

*Colors for
Toned Grounds*

Colored grounds are not manufactured commercially, therefore we shall have to prepare them. The process is the same as when applying a new white lead ground to a cotton canvas (see pages 31–32). White lead as sold in cans can be used as well as tube paint. A stiff paint must be thinned with some copal or retouching varnish.

The following colors should be used for various grounds: Pink color can be obtained from white and venetian red; add a little ochre or naples yellow to brighten up the hue of the pink. A gray ground can be prepared from white, prussian blue, and umber. A little more blue will give a silvery tone and a little more umber will make warmer and duller nuances. The gray should not be darker than a light pastel tone. A ground of yellowish color can be prepared from white and ochre.

*Application of
Toned Grounds*

The ground should in most cases be applied with a palette knife. On oversmooth canvases a brush should be used and the harsh marks of the bristle can be smoothed with a flat sable brush. (This is demonstrated on Plates 7-A & B, page 21.)

Except for the gray ground which dries rapidly, all the other toned grounds will need at least one week to dry sufficiently. To speed up drying, use cobalt siccative.

I have discussed so far only the toned ground which is, in fact, an

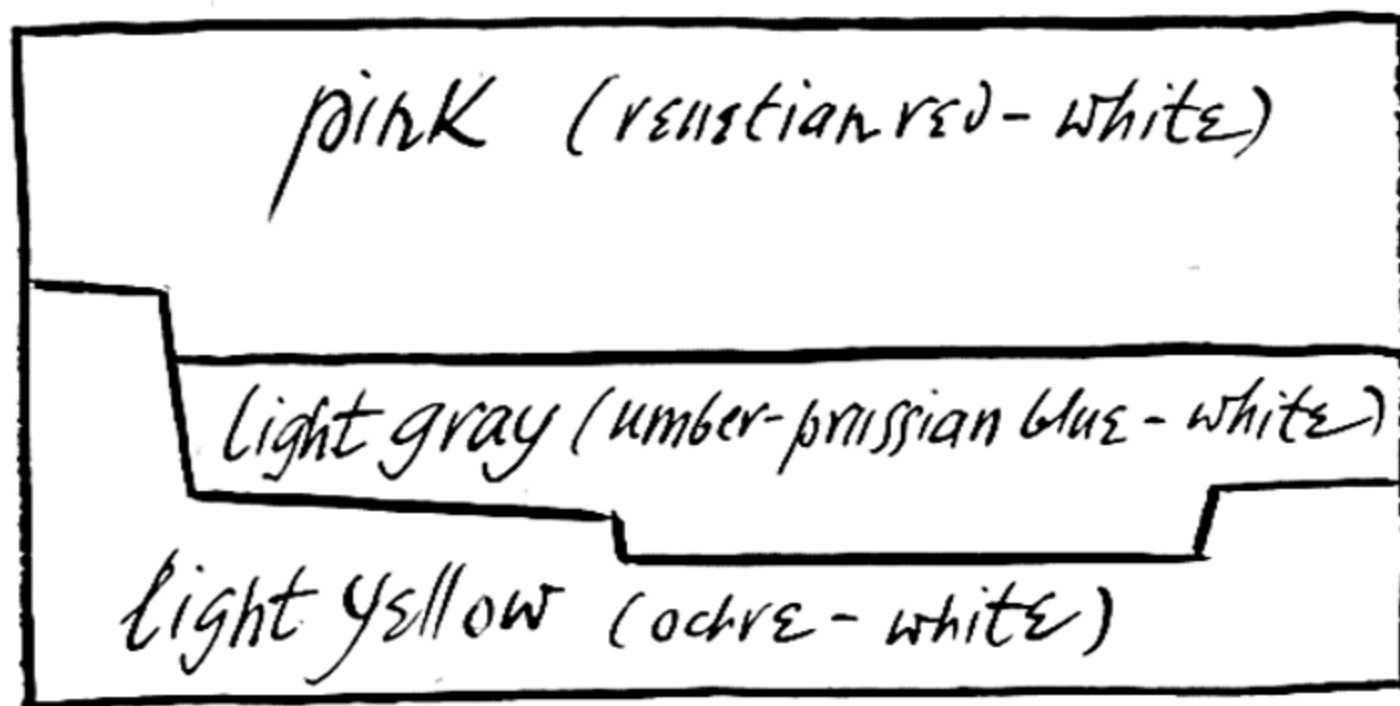
underpainting executed in one color. The word underpainting in its orthodox meaning refers, however, to a surface treatment in *various colors*.

In the following I shall demonstrate a few possibilities of underpainting in various colors, and suggest colors for overpainting.

EXAMPLE NO. 1—(a) Underpainting; (b) Overpainting

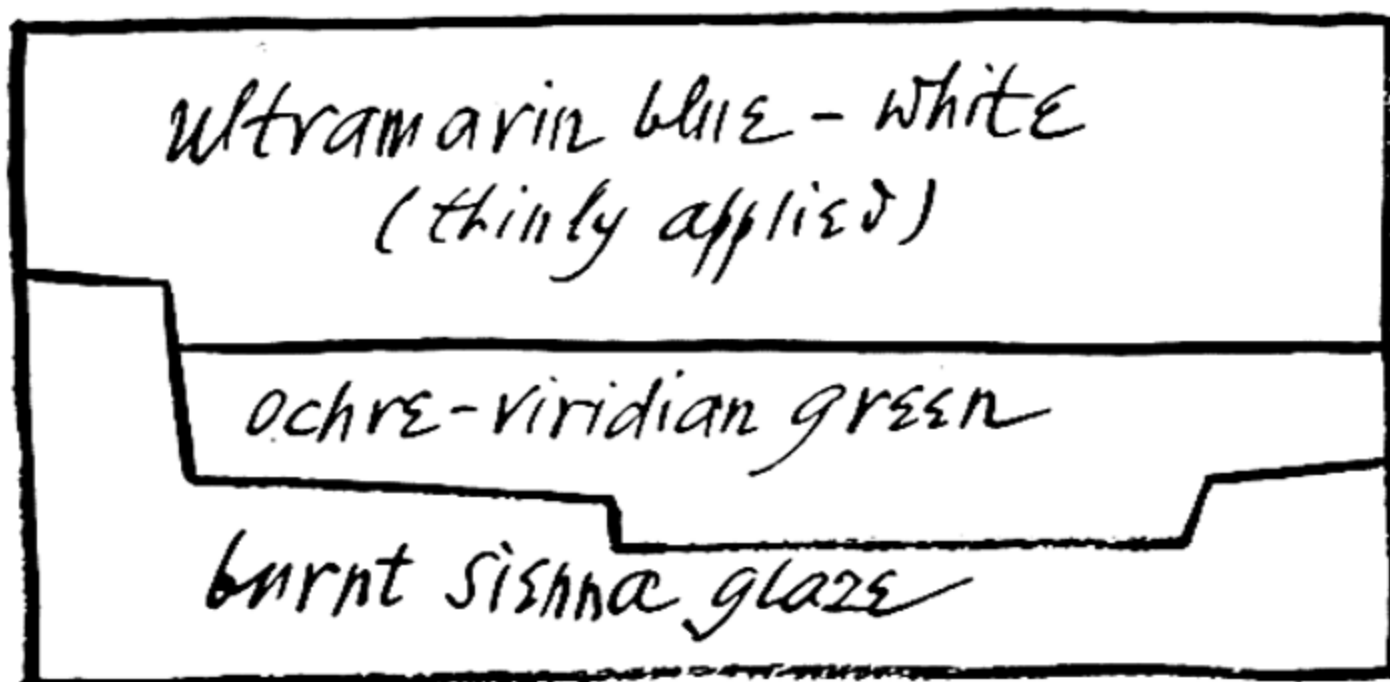
All the colors in this underpainting were kept in pale, pastel-like tones.

*Underpainting
and Overpaint-
ing Demonstra-
tions*



GRAPH A

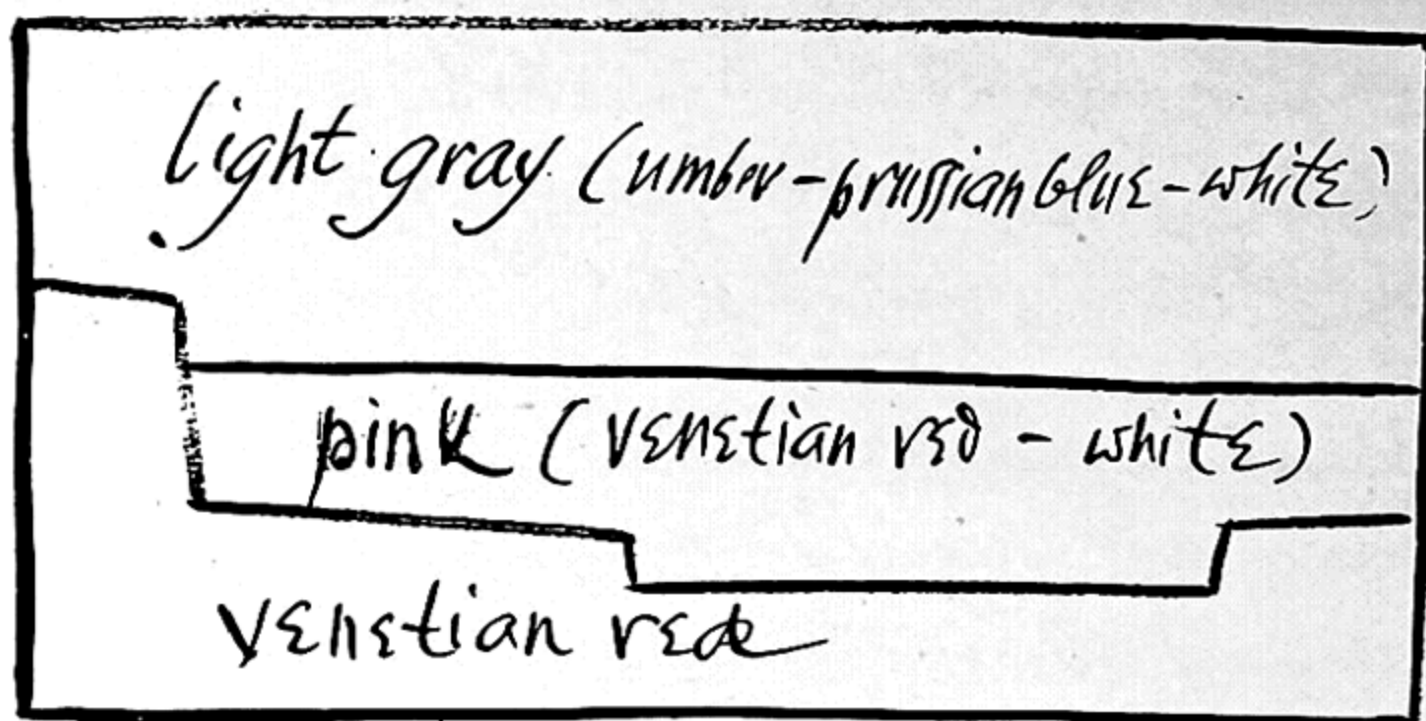
Example No. 1—Underpainting



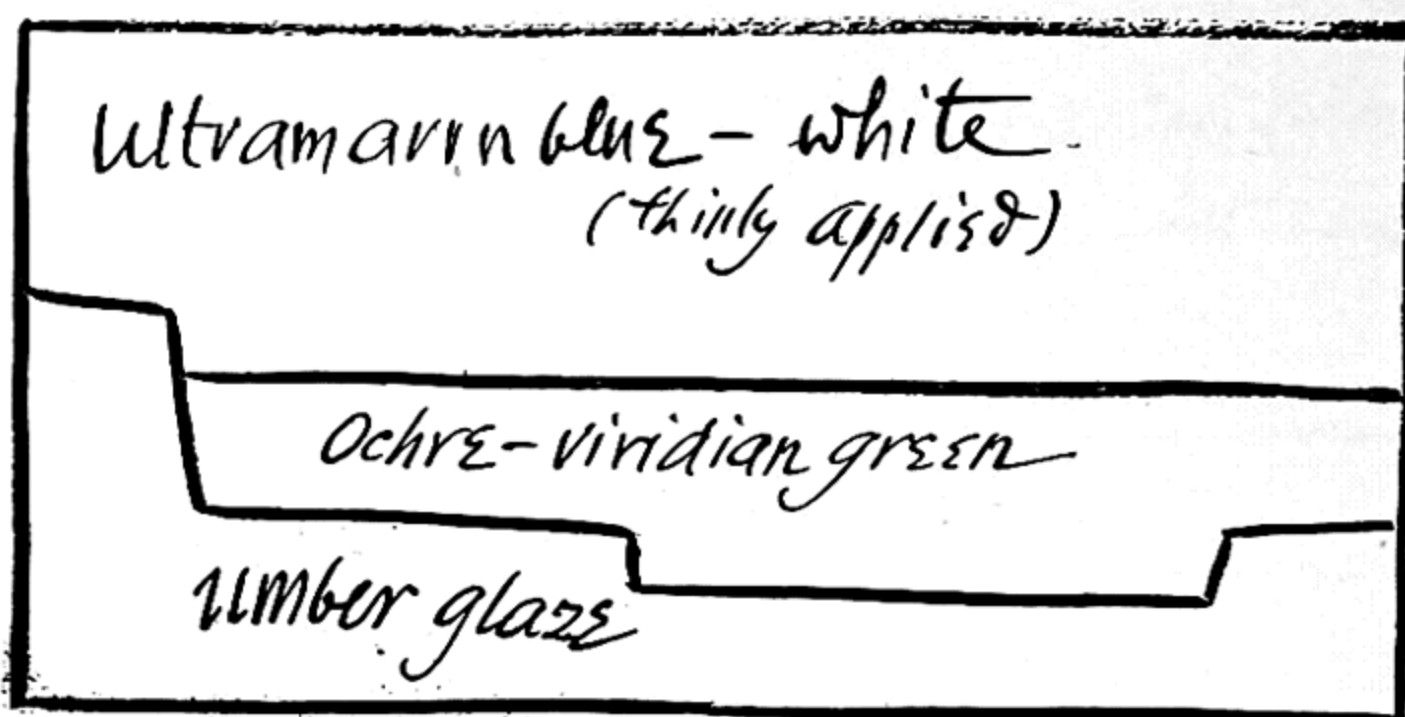
GRAPH B
Overpainting

EXAMPLE NO. 2—(a) Underpainting; (b) Overpainting

All the colors in this underpainting were kept in pale, pastel-like tones.



GRAPH A
Example No. 2—Underpainting



GRAPH B
Overpainting

*Different Underpaintings—
Different Effects*

When considering the two examples, both of which were executed in identical colors but on different underpaintings, it is at once obvious that the appearance of the final paintings differs; of course it is the different underpainting which is responsible for the differ-

ent coloristic effects. However, the stronger the impasto of the overpainting, the more will the activity of the underlying color be dimmed.

The following rules are suggested for underpainting:

1. Use paints of stiff consistency, that is, do not dilute them with the painting medium. Too stiff paint, however, is not easily movable, therefore it should be thinned with copal or retouching varnish. White lead must in most cases be mixed with other colors to create a luminous underpainting.

*Consistency of
Paint in Under-
painting*

2. In order to have an underpainting dry well in shortest possible time, an addition of siccative to the paint will be needed (see p. 25). When paints are mixed with umber, the use of siccative is unnecessary, because umber acts as a drier.

*Drying of Paint
in Underpaint-
ing*

3. On a rough canvas, a palette knife is the best suited for executing an underpainting efficiently. On a smooth canvas it is better to use a brush. Small surfaces, too, can more easily be painted over with a soft sable brush. Sometimes roughness of the underpainting may not be desirable because it can cause disturbing effects. If this is the case, sandpaper can be used to smooth excessive impasto. (Only a surface which has dried throughout should be sandpapered.)

*Tools for
Underpainting*

4. It is more advantageous to have the contours well blended in an underpainting; when overpainting, hard contours may become quite disturbing.

On Plate 13-A two color areas meet without merging. On Example B blending of color was effected by brush and palette knife.

*Contours in
Underpainting*

5. Are corrections of underpaintings possible? Yes, repeated cor-

*Correcting
Underpainting*

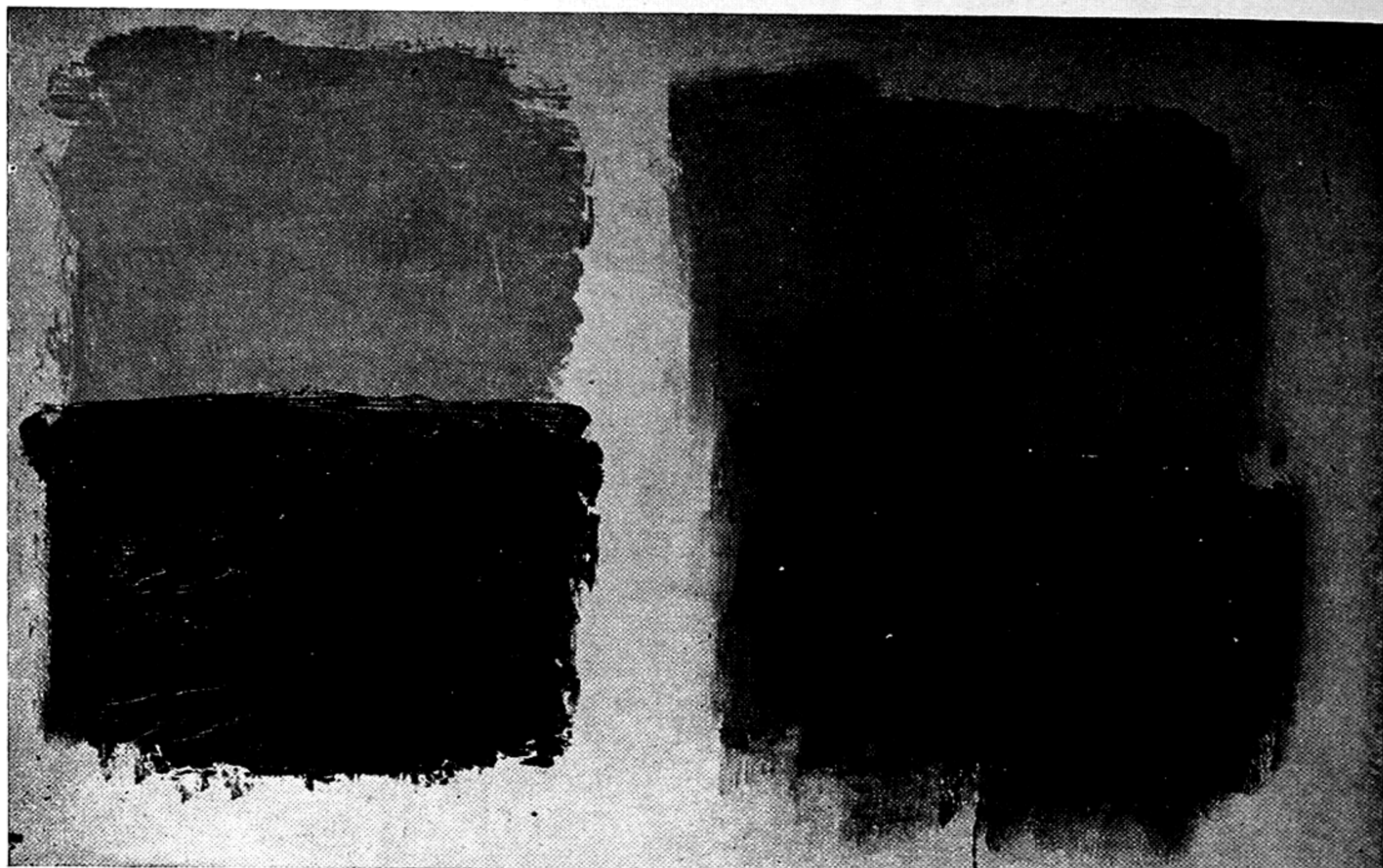


PLATE 13-A

Two color areas meet without merging

PLATE 13-B

Blending of color was effected by brush and palette knife

rection of underpainting can be carried out. It is advisable, however, to use a thin varnish such as copal or retouching varnish between the paint layers so as to promote better adhesion.

For those who wish to experiment with various types of underpainting, I suggest a few exercises:

Underpainting

Naples yellow
cadmium yellow
light gray

Overpainting

viridian green
burnt sienna
alizarin crimson

Underpainting

white
cadmium yellow
pink

ochre-white
cadmium red
umber

Overpainting

viridian green
ultramarine blue
burnt sienna

cadmium red
umber
black

Landscape

IN DISCUSSING the technique of painting, I shall demonstrate various procedures by specific examples.

*Painting Out
of Doors*

First let us consider painting out of doors. Here the preparation of an underpainting is not feasible, because, as a rule, the ever-changing light conditions make a deliberate approach impossible. A toned ground is also not quite appropriate for coloristic handling of a more or less impressionistic nature. Therefore, for taking quick notes out of doors, a white ground is preferable.

Likewise, planning and developing of a composition on paper first and then transferring it to the canvas is practically impossible. All such deliberate actions are not conducive to spontaneity and freshness when painting from nature. To reflect one's impressions freely, maximum freedom from the hindrance of preparatory action is desirable. The Impressionists and the Post-Impressionists did not paint their pictures in studios and, generally, they did not use underpainting.

*Character of the
Canvas*

To facilitate unhampered progress the canvas should be comparatively smooth. Any excessive roughness of the ground will involve efforts to subdue it and thus make the rendering of an immediate impression more difficult. Therefore smooth-surfaced panels are very well suited for this type of painting.

*Sketching on
Canvas*

When a motif has been selected a quick sketch can be made with charcoal or one may sketch on the canvas with a thin turpentine-

diluted blue, yellow or red color. Painting can proceed directly on the lightly contoured sketch.

Oiling of the canvas before starting to paint (see page 70) is inadvisable because the canvas ground which has not received a coating with paint may be absorbent and take in some of the medium. On perfectly nonabsorbent canvas, some oil can be sparingly rubbed into the surface (before sketching on it with paint), and painting can then proceed on the lightly oiled ground. The advantage of this procedure is that with the reduction of friction between the brush and the canvas greater fluency of brush-stroke can be achieved.

Oiling of Canvas

When painting thinly, the presence of a varnish in the oil-medium is most appropriate because the resin promotes the adhesion of paint to the canvas and prevents the thin paint from dripping off. A medium prepared with copal resin, because of the greater adhesive capacity of this resin, is preferable to damar or any other resin varnish.

*Painting with
Liquid Colors*

It is in most cases agreeable to have the outdoor sketches dry as quickly as possible, therefore siccatives should be used to accelerate drying.

As to colors used for outdoor painting—they will vary little from those used when painting indoors. Although any possible color combination may find its place, depending on the painter's predilection, certain principles must be observed if one desires to achieve specific effects. For example: Certain colors will induce in us the feeling of distance—we refer to them as *atmospheric colors*—and others suggest nearness; the latter are known as *local colors*.

*Atmospheric
Colors*

To give a sense of distance, colors must be less pronounced than those in the foreground and, as a rule, of blue or blue-green tonality.

This is because the atmosphere appears to be bluish-green. Hence, atmospheric effects are produced with ultramarine, prussian blue, viridian green, naples yellow. All these colors (with the exception of naples yellow) are transparent, therefore they will have to be mixed with white. To render a blue tint green, naples yellow is the most appropriate color. Here precaution must be taken to keep the green tints subdued by the addition of white, which cuts the intensity of any color combination.

Local Colors

The nearer the objects appear, the more pronounced will be their color. Strong reds or yellows, the local colors, suggest close proximity of the objects to the eye because atmospheric conditions such as moisture no longer influence the color. To familiarize oneself with the problems of atmospheric effects, and their gradual transition into local colors, the following exercises should be carried out:

EXERCISE NO. I

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

1. Blue: ultramarine, white.
2. White.
3. Viridian green, white.
4. Viridian green, naples yellow, white.
5. Ultramarine, viridian, ochre, white.
6. Ochre, cadmium yellow, white.
7. Umber, cadmium yellow, white.
8. Burnt sienna, cadmium yellow.

All transitions (outlines) between the color fields should be well blended.

EXERCISE NO. 2

Prussian blue—white, umber.

1
2
3
4

1. (Only a trace of umber should be used to cut the intensity of the blue color.)
2. Prussian blue, white, umber, naples yellow.
3. Viridian green, cadmium yellow, red, white.
4. UMBER, cadmium red.

On these examples, blue or blue-green are the colors of the distance. However, this need not always be the rule. In practice, one may juggle the hot and the cold colors and create distance through increase and decrease of the colors' intensity and through juxtaposition of colors.

In Exercises 1 and 2 I have referred to blended outlines. Outlines or contours (sometimes called edges) of objects also play an important role in representation of distance in landscape. When focussing the attention on the foreground, for example, it is logical to define objects clearly. Sharper contours, therefore, will be used in the foreground, whereas the background will appear blurred. The procedure can, of course, be reversed. Sharply contoured objects can be in the distance and fuzzy soft contours in the foreground. Again one may prefer to use contours which blend with the surroundings throughout the entire painting. Others may choose hard outlines for all objects, regardless of the atmospheric phenomena. It is well, however, to re-

*Treatment
of Contours*

member that generally, because of the atmospheric moisture, the more distant an object, the softer the contours will appear. But, should the atmosphere be free from moisture—as it may be at certain seasons or in certain climates—even distant motifs will appear distinctly outlined.

All these considerations point to the fact that there are no taboos in painting. Any device can be used—and made acceptable—depending on the painter's power to convince the beholder. And the conviction will not necessarily depend on the fact that a landscape appears "real." It is the artistry of a painter which makes a painting real.

Painting Landscape Indoors

In the foregoing chapter I discussed painting landscapes from nature on a white canvas without the aid of an underpainting. Now, one can continue to work on such a sketch in the studio, but every bit of painting done on top of the first rendering will constitute in fact "painting on an underpainting"—the underpainting being in this case the original sketch.

However, when painting indoors, it is possible to proceed in a more deliberate fashion and plan for the final effects methodically. In a methodical procedure the painter attempts to previsualize these final effects as far as possible, although often not every color relation can be predetermined.

Another advantage of painting indoors is that it affords us the opportunity of planning the composition leisurely; this should, as a rule, be done on paper as described on page 43.

There are numerous approaches to painting a landscape, and often

quite opposite methods may lead to equally good results. Since only the results decide the issue, I cannot very well refer to the one and only "right" method. However, I can point to some sound principles for guidance of the inexperienced.

Skies

When skies of predominantly blue color are planned, a blue underpainting is rarely appropriate; a pink or a gray ground, on the other hand, will increase the value of the superimposed blue color.

It is always advantageous to start with a darker color scheme and to lighten the shades as work progresses. The point to note here is that when painting in light tones a considerable quantity of white must be introduced from the start, and practice will show that, once a quantity of white paint lies on the canvas, adding color to it will create chalky or muddy effects.

Blue color can best be kept in check with umber and white which neutralize blues to grays. Yellow ochre can be used to render blue greenish, and naples yellow is most suitable for delicate green-blue nuances. Cadmium yellow will rarely be of use in painting skies, except for flamboyant sunsets. Needless to stress that nothing is easier than to produce garish picture-postcard effects when using "flamboyant" colors.

If the color of the sky or a sky area appears pink, for example, gray or blue underpainting will do well. Pink color, however (that is, venetian red and white or at times cadmium red and white), does not go well with ultramarine because the resulting mixture yields an unpleasantly sweet violet. But prussian blue is excellent for mix-

*Painting Light
into Dark*

*Neutralizing
Blue Colors*



PLATE 14-A

Clouds—painted with a bristle brush

tures with all the red and pink colors. Other colors that can be satisfactorily used with pink for skies are viridian green, naples yellow, ochre, and black.

Dark Colors

When a dark color scheme is planned, light yellow underpainting prepared from white and ochre will be quite useful. When painting



PLATE 14-B

Clouds—painted with a flat sable brush

thinly on such an underpainting, the light yellow ground lends luminosity even to the darkest area. The dark color can be obtained from mixtures of prussian blue (or ultramarine and black), umber, venetian red. To neutralize strong red color passages, green can be introduced. This green can be produced from prussian blue or black

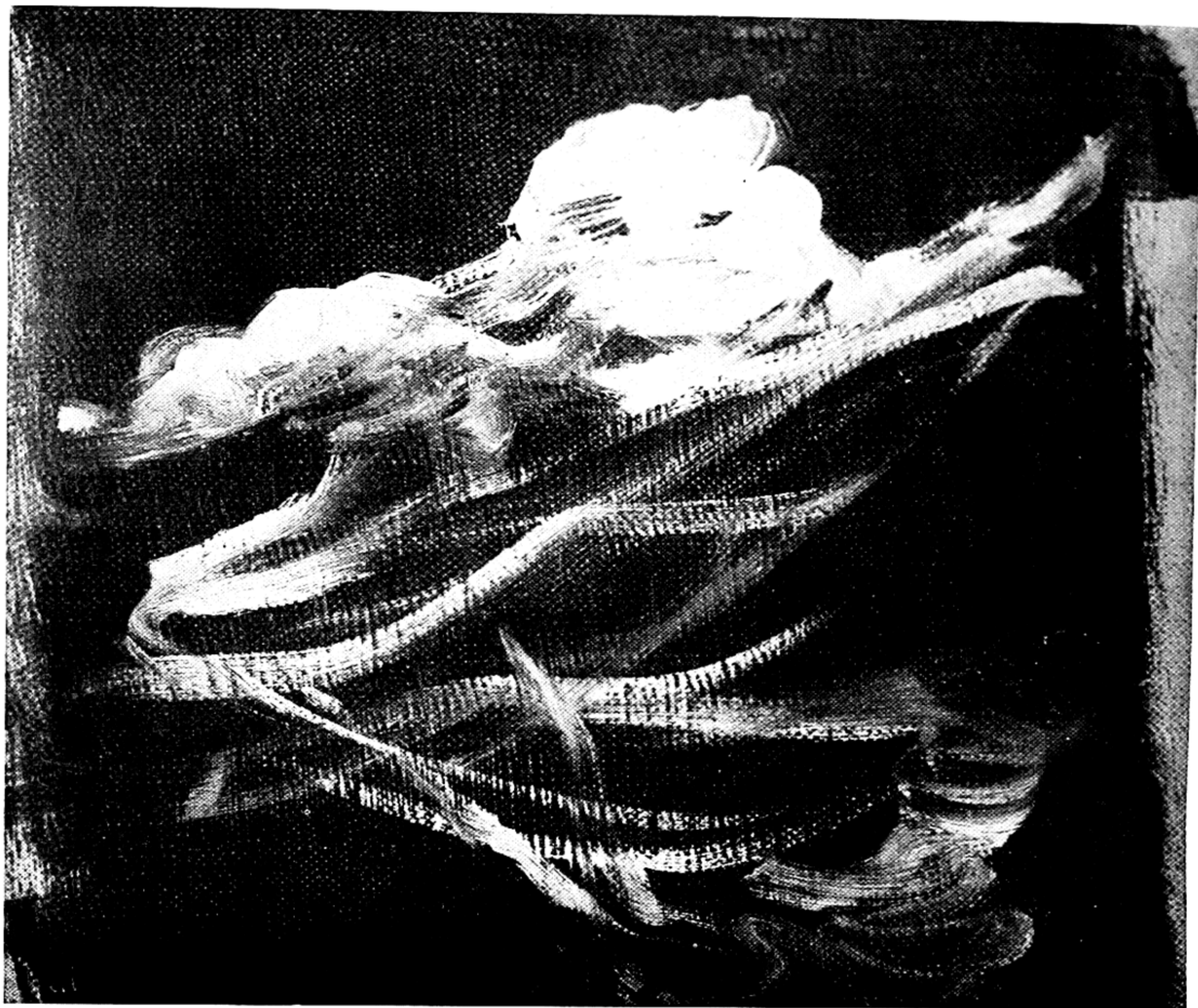


PLATE 15-A

Clouds—painted with a pointed sable brush

and cadmium yellow. An important consideration when painting skies (or anything else for that matter) is the surface appearance of the paint, or texture, as it is known. Different tools will produce different surface characteristics. On Plate 14 two different treatments are represented. On Example A bristle brushes were used. Deep

Texture



PLATE 15-B

Clouds—painted with a palette knife

grooves caused by the hard bristles and sharply defined brush-strokes are here evident. On Example B smoother surface, softer transitions, and more fluent brush-strokes result from the use of a flat sable brush. On Plate 15-A large round sable brushes produced a variety of liquid wavering brush-strokes and, finally, Plate 15-B represents effects



PLATE 16-A

Leaves—painted on a dark ground

produced by means of the palette knife. But there is no need to limit oneself to one type of painting tools. One and the same surface can show the use of a variety of instruments.

Foliage

Now one can, with perfectly undisturbed conscience, paint every leaf on a summer bush or tree, or reduce all the leaves to one mass. One can also choose all the conceivable steps between these extremes. But in every case, the choice of a sensible method of approach can greatly facilitate realization of the painter's aims.

On most occasions an underlying color of bright yellow, such as cadmium yellow mixed with white, will lend luminosity to an area representing foliage. Any combination of green colors when applied in transparent or semi-transparent fashion to such an underpainting will instantly create the impression of an alive, vibrant mass of leaves. Here the luminous underpainting can be left visible to suggest the highlights of the foliage, upon which the shadows can be painted in dark colors.

*Underpainting
in Bright Colors*



PLATE 16-B

Foliage painted with a pointed sable brush on a light ground

Dark underpainting can also be used for painting foliage. But when painting on such a dark ground, green (or any other) color must be mixed with white, or with strong cadmium yellow. In contrast to the foregoing example, where the underpainting suggests the highlight, here the underpainting will serve to represent the deepest shadows.

*Underpainting
in Dark Colors*

*Painting on
Dark Ground*

On Plate 16-A I have demonstrated painting leaves with a round sable brush on a dark ground. The procedure is as follows: (1) Moisten the dry underpainting slightly with the painting medium (2) Apply to it a thin veil (glaze) of any dark color—it can be identical with the color of the underpainting or it can deviate from it. Into this dark glaze paint with a round sable brush the leaf-pattern with a thick, bright, luminous paint (a green prepared from cadmium yellow, prussian blue and white, for example). Thus a light plastic pattern is created on a dark ground. Because of the wet glaze underlying this design, softness of contour can be achieved. If painted directly on the dry ground (without the glaze or oiling), the contours would appear hard.

*Painting on
Light Ground*

Plate 16-B, on the other hand, represents treatment of leaves in draftsmanlike fashion, that is, the design is executed with a pointed sable brush with dark color on a light underpainting. Here, too, the light underpainting should not only first be oiled, but it should also carry some thin, wet paint into which the design is laid, otherwise hard definitions may result. This, however, may not be objectionable—it all depends on the painter's intention and his esthetic leanings.

*Vibrant Colors
—Dull Colors*

Moreover, large masses of leaves can be painted with bristle brushes or a palette knife. Here it is important to remember the often repeated principle: When green (or any other) color is mixed thoroughly with a brush or a palette knife, a dull or monotonous color will result. *The less the colors are intermixed, the more vibrant they will appear.*

*Atmospheric
Effects*

In painting leaves, observance of atmospheric effects is particularly important. As usual atmospheric effects are expressed in con-

tours and colors. Foliage which is not in focus or which is in the distance will, generally, call for soft, blurred contours. Also the color will, according to the distance of the motif from the view of the beholder, take on a more or less blue or faded appearance. I said "generally," because some schools of painting do not subscribe to the principles of atmospheric perspective. As for myself, I have no preference. It all depends on how convincingly the painter states his case.

A rock, it goes without saying, is a rugged, palpable object; it asserts itself with bulk and rigid volume. Whereas most natural objects are endowed with some animation, which changes their surface appearance, stones are inert. Therefore the treatment of the stone's texture will be of prime importance.

Rocks

Generally, two diametrically different treatments can be accorded to the surface of rocks—a heavy impasto or a glaze. The impasto suggests by its bulk and roughness the rugged rock surface; by means of a glaze the rock's stratification and inner structure can be represented.

Texture

Let us first examine the manner in which a heavy impasto can best be carried out. I have stressed before that an underpainting should be smooth, so as to leave the painter maximum leeway for the eventual treatment of textures. A smooth surface, however, will not be practical as a foundation for thick paint layers. Therefore, when heavy impasto is planned, one should create a rough surface, and, after it has dried, put another rough surface on top of it. This procedure can be repeated several times, until the desired effect has been achieved.

Heavy Impasto

The palette knife is very well suited to producing heavy paint layers. The palette knife and brush-stroke can also relieve each other—

*Use of the
Palette Knife*



PLATE 17-A

Rocks—painted pastosely with palette knife

one stratum can be executed with a bristle brush and allowed to dry, and the next paint layer may then be painted on it with the palette knife. Of course, the knife should not be handled as though buttering a slice of toast, that is, when spreading a smooth, flat surface, but one should manipulate the blade so as to create a rough surface.

While speaking of impasto, I shall again emphasize the fact that one thick paint layer may take considerable time to dry throughout,



PLATE 17-B

Rocks—glazes applied with palette knife. Rock structure delineated with a pointed sable brush whereas a few thin layers of quick-drying paint can follow each other in relatively quick succession.

On Plate 17-A a coarse paint surface was executed in the manner described above and on 17-B a smooth effect has been achieved, also with a knife, which, as we know, can be used for either kind of sur-

*Drying of
Impasto*

Glazing Effects face effect—extra smooth or extra rough. On this example, the light underpainting was carried out with a palette knife, and, upon drying, a darker, thin glaze was laid on it, also with a palette knife. The rock structure was then simply drawn in with a pointed sable brush and blended with a flat sable brush.

Choice of Colors As to the colors—any conceivable combination can be used. Since white will, in most cases, exceed in quantity all other colors, a firm body of paint will always be retained. Other paints of good body are the earth colors, such as ochre, umber, burnt sienna, also naples yellow. But even “flimsy” colors such as ivory black or viridian green, when mixed with white, will gain firmness.

Hills, Mountains, Foreground, Water

The problem of painting distant hills or mountains is, of necessity, a matter of one's attitude toward atmospheric perspective, because a hill or a mountain can be viewed only from a distance. Naturally, when placed in the foreground, a segment of a hill is all that can be represented in a painting.

Painting Distant Planes The action of the atmosphere on the distance and the choice of colors for rendering atmospheric effects was discussed on pages 59–60. As to the manner of paint application it will, because of the predominance of white color, be pastose.

However, on a white or off-white underpainting, a glaze prepared from viridian green or any of the blue colors and naples yellow can also be effectively used for painting distances.

Painting Tools In painting these distant effects, one need not confine himself to using one type of brush. Round sable, and bristle brushes, as well as

palette knife, should be employed for the purpose of achieving variable textures and delineations.

The colors in the foreground are, because of their proximity to the eye of the beholder, uninfluenced by the atmosphere, therefore, depending on the case, cadmium yellow and red, burnt sienna, and any other strong color can be used here straight, without the admixture of white. The colors can be put on thinly or pastosely. In the first case, the nature of the underpainting is unimportant—a thick layer of paint will cover up any color of the underpainting. However, when the final colors are to be used in a transparent or semi-transparent fashion, the color of the underpainting is of great consequence.

Local Colors

For example, a glaze of prussian blue or burnt sienna or viridian green will be most effective on a light ground, such as one prepared from ochre and white, or venetian red and white, or a light gray ground. The activity of glazes will, however, be entirely lost if they are painted thinly on a dark underpainting.

*Effectiveness of
Glazes*

In rendering effects such as those seen on water, glazes can be used only on areas which are to appear dark. Here the application of prussian blue, viridian green, ultramarine, on a white or off-white color is practical. The high lights on such a dark surface can be obtained by brushing pure white color into the dark glaze or, one may scrape off the wet dark color and thus reveal the light color underneath, wherever a high light appears desirable.

*Underpainting
Used for High-
Lights*

Figure, Portrait, Draperies

Let us examine here the range of colors used in painting flesh. First, we must consider the lights and shades of the flesh and then

*Flesh Colors as
Seen in Light*

we have to decide whether their tonality should be cold or warm.

The range of colors used to paint flesh in full light is narrow. The white color for the skin will be mixed from white lead and some ochre; a little venetian red can be added for pink tones; admixture of ultramarine will produce cooler nuances.

White lead and ochre are all one needs for yellow tones. Ochre is a relatively mild, warm color, eminently suited for painting flesh, and much more easily controlled than the powerful cadmium yellow, or the cold naples yellow.

Likewise, venetian red is more useful than the fiery and somehow sweet cadmium red and clearer in tone than burnt sienna, which is a little brownish. Alizarin crimson is hardly desirable for painting flesh. When mixed with white, its purplish tones become unmanageable.

*Flesh Colors as
Seen in Shade*

In painting shadows, the coloristic problems multiply. The simple choice of colors which will serve in most cases is: ultramarine, umber, venetian red, ochre, and white lead. To mix four colors for producing a flesh tint seen in the shade seems like a large order. But the strategy here is really quite simple. UMBER and ochre are the brown colors; the first is dark and dull, and the second lively and light. Venetian red adds warmth to the combination, ultramarine is used to darken or to cool down the tonality of these colors, and white, as always, reduces the hues of all the colors.

Underpainting

A neutral, light gray color is the simplest kind of an underpainting for flesh colors. White, prussian blue, and umber will produce a light, pastel-like gray tone. However, a light pink or light green ground can also be used.

The following simple exercises should be carried out by the painter to acquaint himself with the possibilities of the four colors suggested for painting flesh:

EXERCISE 1—PLATE 18-A. *Light gray toned ground*

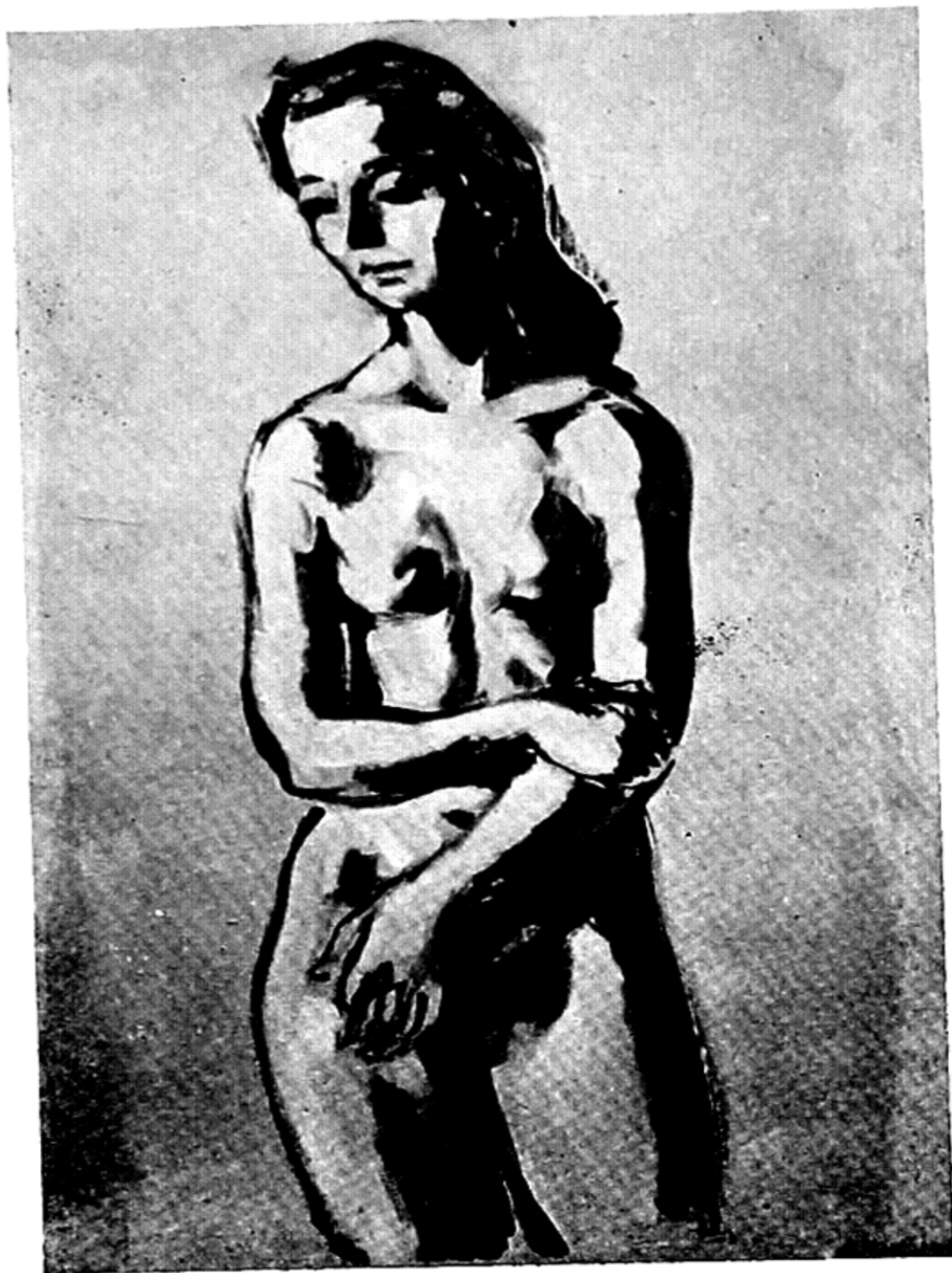


PLATE 18-A

Figure painting—shadows indicated on a light-gray toned ground

*Figure Painting
on Gray Ground*

First step: Draw the figure on paper (about 12 inches high). Transfer to the canvas. Second step: Paint the shadows thinly using white, umber, light red, ochre, and ultramarine. Keep the tonality warm, that is, add ultramarine sparingly. (Use bristle brush, Nos. 5 to 7.) Third step: Paint the lights with white lead, mixed with



PLATE 18-B

Figure painting—lights painted in and blended with the shadows

ochre. (To prevent the colors from getting dirty different brushes should be used for lights and shades.) Fourth step: This is illustrated on Plate 18-B. Soft blending of light and shade was produced with a flat sable-hair brush about half an inch wide.

*Blending of
Colors*

Blending colors with palette knife is demonstrated on Plate 19.



PLATE 19

Figure painting—blending of colors with a palette knife

*Painting with
Palette Knife*

This "rugged" treatment was carried out after the figure had first been painted with a bristle brush. (For painting background see pages 81-82.)

EXERCISE 2—*Light gray toned ground*

*Cold color
Scheme*

Carry out the study in the same manner shown in Exercise 1, but reduce the quantity of umber and venetian red and increase the amount of ultramarine.

EXERCISE 3—*Light gray toned ground*

Change colors to: Lights—ochre, white, and a trace of venetian red. Shades—burnt sienna, ochre, ultramarine.

EXERCISE 4—*Pink toned ground*

*Painting on
Pink Ground*

The same as Exercise 1, but omit ultramarine entirely.

EXERCISE 5—*Pink toned ground*

Change colors to: Lights—ochre, white, with a trace of ultramarine. Shades—ultramarine, umber, ochre.

Overpainting

When the first layer of paint has dried, a different color scheme can be applied on top of the first painting should this appear desirable. In such an instance, the first painting will again become an underpainting. The repainting can continue until one satisfies his aims (see page 91).

Range of Colors

The range of colors which can be used for painting flesh can be enlarged or reduced. But the four fundamental colors which I have suggested, lend themselves to painting every conceivable shade of

skin. Umber, ultramarine blue, and white, for example, could easily reproduce the skin color of a Negro, and venetian red and white may suffice to paint the complexion of a baby.

Of course, if realism is not one's aim, any conceivable color, even prussian blue and straight, unmitigated cadmium red can be used for painting flesh.

Figure Painting and Background

The five exercises described above should be, as suggested, painted on gray or pink grounds—which will become the preliminary color of the background.

In choosing the final color of a background, our chief consideration is to give the figures the greatest possible effectiveness. The background should support and enhance the main motif which in our case is the figure study.

*Colors for the
Background*

There are no set rules as to which colors may serve for a background—it all depends on the coloristic appearance of the figure and the treatment of light and shade.

It is reasonable to start first with a neutral background. Neutral colors are always made up of several colors strongly intermixed with white, which reduces their high key.

Neutral Colors

In discussing the background I had in mind an empty space, an arrangement of tones and not a representation of concrete objects. Naturally, any conceivable motif can be chosen for a background—the interior of a room, a landscape, etc.

When painting the background, the treatment of the figure's contours must be considered. The contour in this case is the meeting

*Background and
Contours*

point of the background and the figure. Now, this outline can be either hard, that is, distinctly divided from the background (Plate 18-A), or it can blend into it (Plate 19). In order to produce soft contours, blending of colors should proceed while the paint on both background and figure is still soft. If this is not the case, the edges around the areas which are to be blended should be repainted. It is often very difficult to produce a soft contour when the paint on either of the adjoining areas has dried. (For blending use a soft sable brush rather than a bristle brush.)

The problem of a specific treatment of contours is a matter of style. It all depends on one's esthetic convictions. The Impressionists blurred the contours; some other schools prefer to emphasize contours with sharp definitions.

When speaking of figure painting, let us consider a simplified treatment which relies chiefly on delineation of contours. Especially when figures (or any other objects for that matter) appear as small details in a composition, the color of the background upon which the figures are placed, can run straight through the figures. The figures are then defined merely by contours and not by a specific color. Color used in this fashion is referred to as "open" color. This is demonstrated on Plate 20. The figures and other motifs were drawn with a pointed sable brush onto the background, using a reddish-brown color for the outlines.

The problem which arises here is whether one should paint on a wet or a dry background. It is easier, of course, to paint on a dry surface because it affords one the leisure to attend to the design with circumspection, to change and arrange it at will. However, a certain



PLATE 20

Open color—motifs delineated on top of a background

harshness of lines results when painting on a color which has dried, even though the surface is first oiled.

When one paints into a wet color, the design becomes integrated with its surroundings and the linear effect is softer and more fluent. Of course, corrections cannot be easily made then without disturbing the wet painting ground.

Painting Details

Painting details such as eyes, mouth, etc., in their actual colors on a small scale, may result in undesired pettiness. It is quite obvious that a few heterogeneous colors grouped on a small area can easily disrupt the unity of a painting. To avoid such pitfalls, one can paint all small details in one of the prevailing colors, that is, colors which are predominant in a certain area.

Portrait Painting

The same principles which I have developed in connection with figure painting apply also to painting a portrait. There is, however, one deviation which is most helpful in instances where a likeness is not easily attainable. Naturally, when the likeness of a sitter is not achieved during the first sitting (which hardly ever happens) overpaintings must follow. Well, one or two overpaintings may not spell disaster, but certainly, if the painter continues to fumble while painting in natural colors, a tired and muddy appearance of the colors at the end is fairly certain. Therefore, starting to paint a portrait in colors ranging from white to gray, the first representing light and the second shade, is a very sensible method. It is an old method, having already been used more than 500 years ago.

Danger of Frequent Overpaintings

Painting in gray colors (on white canvas or toned ground) is referred to as *grisaille*. The grays should be very light and pale and

mixed from white, prussian blue, and umber. Such an underpainting will, because of the presence of the two rapidly drying colors (umber and prussian blue) dry in the shortest time. Very little oil should be used in order to keep the paint as stiff and opaque as possible. As many of these gray underpaintings can be carried out as are needed to establish a satisfactory likeness and modeling. Overpaintings with natural colors should then follow on a perfectly dry grisaille.

*Underpainting
in Gray Colors*

An underpainting in grisaille serves a dual purpose—to guide the painter and to add luminosity to the final painting. As usual, before overpainting some painting medium should be sparingly rubbed into the grisaille to permit the brush to glide on the paint surface with ease.

*Advantage of
Grisaille*

Another simple method of painting a portrait on a toned ground is illustrated on Plates 21-A & B. The head was painted in the following manner: The color of the toned ground was prepared from white lead, venetian red, and ochre, and allowed to dry. The drawing was then transferred to it and protected with fixative. Next a dark flesh color prepared from white lead, umber, ochre, ultramarine and venetian red was painted in to indicate the dark parts of the head (Example A). As can be seen on this example, the plastic appearance of the modeling was thus instantaneously achieved.

*Painting Portrait
on Toned
Grounds*

On the next Example B light flesh tints mixed from white and some ochre were brushed in, and blended a little with the previously applied dark flesh tints. Of course, both the light and the dark tints should be wet, otherwise blending of colors would be difficult.

*Blending of
Colors*

On the demonstration described above the underpainting was of



PLATE 21-A

Portrait painting—shadows painted on a toned (pink) ground

pink color. But the color can just as well be light gray or light yellow (see page 80).

*Painting
Features*

There is no need to repeat here the list of colors which can be used for painting flesh, as this was discussed in the preceding chapter. However, a few additional colors will have to be considered when painting a portrait—those used in painting eyes, mouth, and hair. Here it is important to observe that the particular colors are co-ordi-



PLATE 21-B

Portrait painting—lights painted in and blended with the shadows

nated with the rest of the color scheme. Eyes which are too blue, for example, may “fall out” and become foreign in the total effect of the head. When an eye-white is too cold, or the emphasis of highlights in the pupil too strong, glassy effects may result. Hard contours of the iris or the pupil may become responsible for a rigid expression.

*Coordinating
Color Schemes*

Painting of the mouth can also become difficult. The mouth should be part of the face and not a foreign element which is merely

*The Color of
Lips*

painted on it. In other words, the contours of the mouth should blend with the surrounding skin.

Venetian red, alizarin crimson and white are the colors for painting lips; for dark effects, alizarin crimson, ultramarine or venetian red and umber are useful. Cadmium red can also be used—but with discretion; it is a hard color for painting lips.

When blending the alizarin crimson of the lips with the white of the skin, an alien violet color appears; here only skilful blending can overcome the difficulty.

Painting Hair

For painting hair, few colors will be used. For black—ivory black and umber, or ivory black and prussian blue. For brown—umber and burnt sienna, or burnt sienna and ochre. For red—burnt sienna used as a glaze on an underpainting prepared from ochre and white, or naples yellow and white. One can also glaze burnt sienna on a light gray ground—depending on the case.

Naples yellow and ochre may be used for light hair, also a small addition of cadmium yellow. The latter, however, is a difficult color, and it should, therefore, be handled with restraint.

Draperies

Painting Draperies

On Plates 22-A & B a simplified method for painting draperies is demonstrated.

On Example A the middle tone of the draperies was first applied to the canvas. (Middle tone is the color which is darker than the lights and lighter than the shades.) Second, the areas in shade were painted. Highlights and reflections were added on Example B and

the whole blended with a flat sable brush. Such procedure not only sounds simple—it is quite simple.

.
I have omitted to speak of flowers, still life painting, etc., because

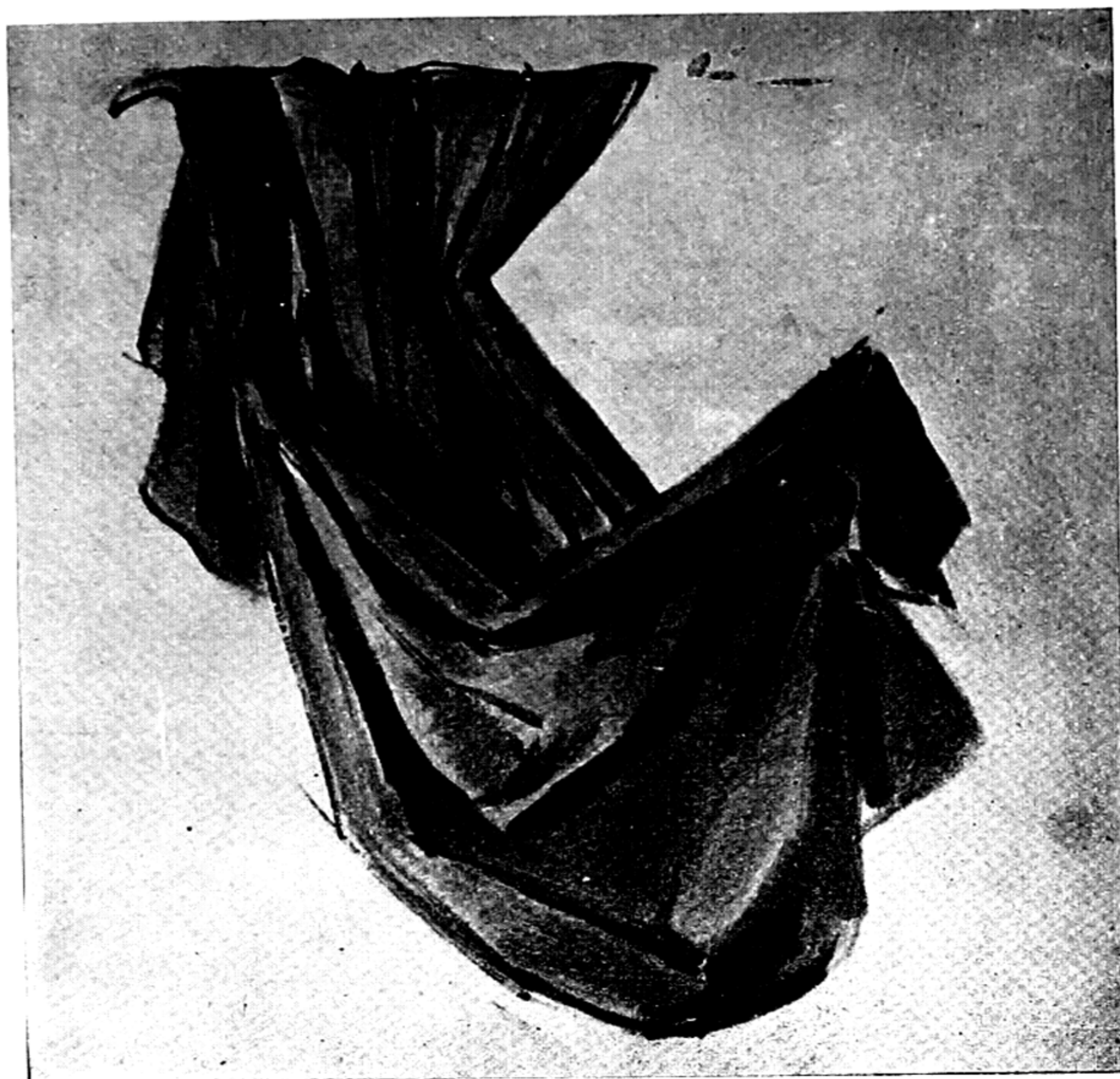


PLATE 22-A

Draperies—shadows indicated on a middle tone

the aim of all the preceding discussions is not so much to give specific recipes, as to outline a general method of procedure. The principles of this method are applicable to all subject matter, be it apples or dragons.

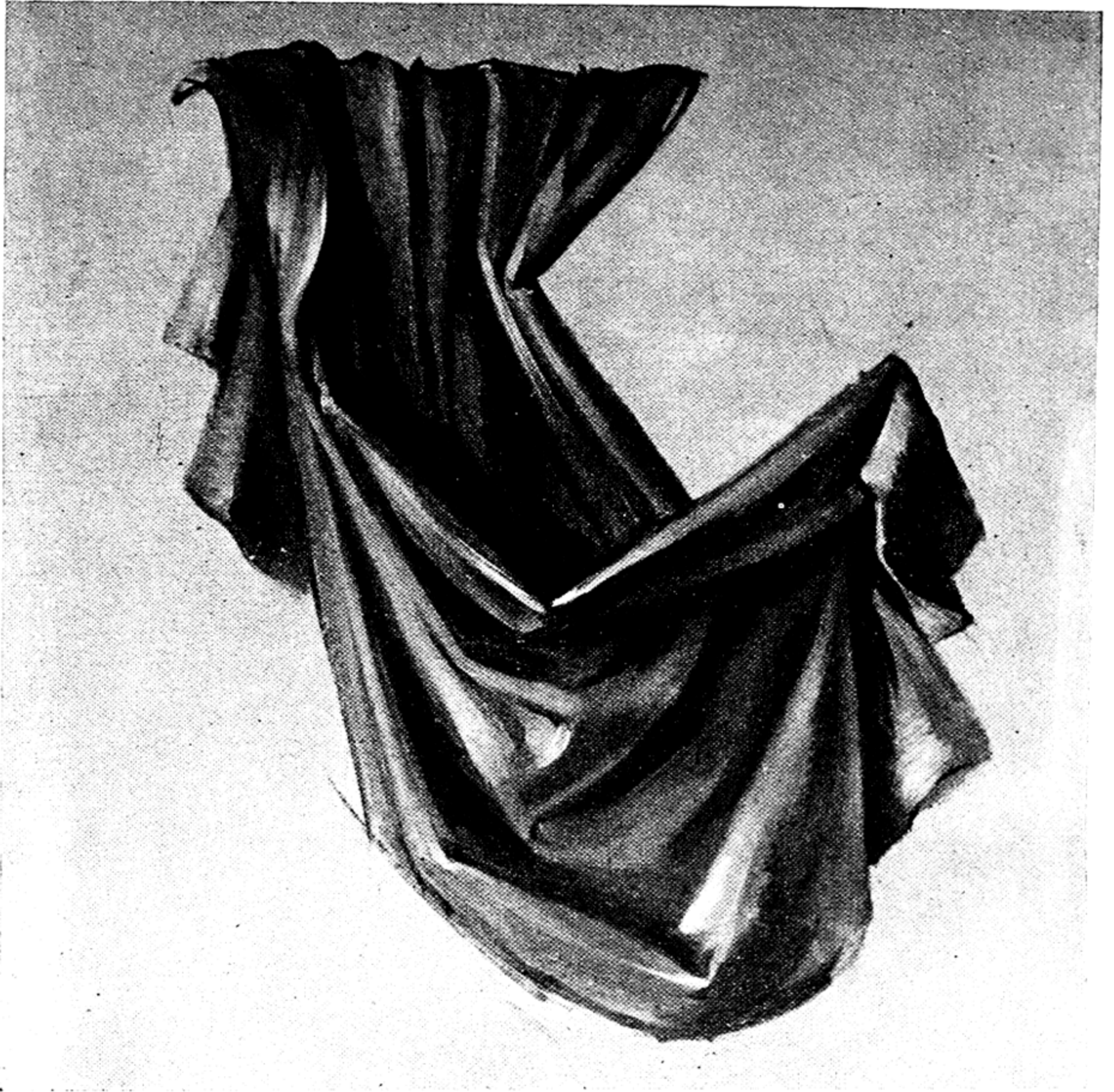


PLATE 22-B

Draperies—highlights painted in, shadows reinforced and blended

Miscellaneous Observations

Overpaintings. An unsuccessful painting need not be discarded. It can be overpainted without the necessity of removing the paint first. All the treatment such a canvas requires is sandpapering. A medium-fine sandpaper should be applied to the canvas in parallel strokes. It will remove the roughness of the impasto and the oil that has dried on the surface; sandpapering will also create fine scratches which will make the subsequent paint layer adhere better.

*Overpainting
Old Paintings*

"Trickling." A paint surface which is saturated with oil can be difficult to overpaint, because the paints applied to it will at times trickle, that is, contract as water does on a glass plate. Trickling can be easily prevented by varnishing a surface before starting to paint on it. Also a little turpentine can be brushed or rubbed onto a paint surface to make it more receptive for overpainting.

*Trickling of
Paint*

Whenever a color passage on a finished painting needs correction, an application of the copal or retouching varnish before repainting is recommended. It takes only a few minutes for the varnish to dry.

Corrections

Paint remover. If one desires to remove an old oil film, benzene is the proper medium rather than a commercial paint remover. The latter is too powerful and the paraffin which it contains cannot easily be eliminated from the crevices of a canvas. To reduce the bite of benzene, mix it with varnolene.

*Removing Hard-
ened Paint*

Tube caps that have become stuck will come off easily when heated with a lighted match.

Sometimes a tube may become perforated or torn. Paint can be taken out of such a defective tube and put into an empty tooth-paste

Refilling Tubes

tube, for example. Such a tube must be first thoroughly rinsed with hot water. This is quite easily done when the closed bottom of the tube is cut off. Fresh paint is put in through this opening, leaving about one inch of tin so as to close the tube safely. When filling a tube with paint one should see to it that the paint settles evenly without leaving any air pockets.

THREE types of varnish produced today are of interest to us: (1) copal varnish (2) damar retouching varnish (3) damar picture varnish. The first is prepared from copal resin and the other two from damar resin. Copal varnish compounded after my own formula and produced commercially can be used for all purposes enumerated below (see page 23). The difference between retouching and final picture varnish rests chiefly in their respective resin concentration; the picture varnish is of stronger concentration; however, retouching varnish can be substituted for the latter when used in heavier applications.

Various Types of Varnish

The application of varnish serves the following purposes: (1) to bring out "sunk-in" color (color which has become flat and dull), before overpainting; (2) to prevent trickling of paint and promote better adhesion of overpaintings (3) to bring out dull or flat color on a finished painting, and to protect the paint film from dirt and moisture.

Action of Varnish

The importance of varnishing can be realized from the fact that paints, unless strongly diluted with the medium and applied to a perfectly dry surface, usually go dull on drying. A dull paint film deprives the colors of their true value; when dull, the darker colors especially (having little or no white) lose their depth entirely. Often some parts of a painting may appear dull and some shiny. This does not contribute agreeably to the coloristic appearance of a painting. All this points to the necessity of varnishing during the process of paint-

ing, in order to revamp the colors of the underpainting, and also varnishing the finished work, in order to protect the paint film and bring out the sunk-in colors.

*Varnishing
Fresh Paintings*

The copal varnish or the retouching varnish can be applied to an underpainting as soon as it becomes dry to the touch, that is, after a day or two. But one should bear in mind that the varnish acts as a solvent on a paint film which has not dried sufficiently. Therefore, in such instances, the use of a harsh bristle brush should be avoided. But the soft sable brush can be safely used even on a freshly dried painting.

*When to Var-
nish Paintings*

On a freshly dried paint surface, varnish will not last very well. Often in a matter of days a paint film may appear dull again. Varnishing finished paintings shortly after their completion, therefore, serves no purpose other than to bring out the colors temporarily.

It is difficult to tell when is the best time for varnishing, as some paintings dry quickly and others slowly. It all depends on the number of underpaintings, the thickness of the impasto, the nature of the colors and the painting medium used. As a rule, varnish applied two to four months after the completion of a painting should last well. Often some parts of a painting may go dull and may require repeated revarnishing.

*Decomposition
of Varnish*

Even under the most favorable conditions varnish will not last forever on a paint surface. Copal varnish is more durable than damar varnish, but in due time they will all deteriorate. How soon a painting may need revarnishing depends chiefly on climatic conditions. Generally, when a painting receives a coat of varnish one or two years

after its completion the varnish will last on it for from five to twenty-five years. Excessive moisture and especially steam heat will contribute to early decomposition of a resin film.

Well-dried paintings can be varnished with a utility brush (about one inch wide), which is particularly suitable for this purpose because it sheds varnish easily and its hair is elastic. Elasticity of hair is quite important, because stiff bristles will scrape varnish off instead of depositing it on the paint surface. (See Plate 3-B.)

Before varnishing, the painting should first be cleaned. Because it is lint-free it is best to use cheesecloth to remove dust. Dirt which is more firmly ingrained in the paint will, in most cases, come off when rubbing the surface gently with the fingers. It is an old experience that somehow our fingers seem to attract dirt. Turpentine or varnolene will still be more effective in removing obstinate dirt.

The process of varnishing is quite simple. A little of the varnish is poured into a dish and the brush is moistened but not drenched with it. Begin brushing methodically, a small area at a time, five or ten inches square, depending on the size of the painting. See to it that no "seams" of adjoining areas show—for varnish always leaves a ridge.

In order to ascertain for oneself whether varnish covers the surface entirely, it is necessary to look at the painting toward the light, from an angle. This allows one to observe and control the spreading of the varnish, since its shiny film is actually all that one can see when looking at a canvas in this way.

A painting should not be doused with varnish—a thin layer is all that is required.

*Varnishing
Brush*

*Cleaning Paint-
ings*

*Application of
Varnish*

*Position of
Canvas when
Varnishing*

*Strong Varnish
Gloss*

If some areas of the painting still appear dull after varnishing, they can be gone over again with the varnish-moistened brush. A stronger gloss can be obtained when a painting is revarnished about 24 hours after the first application. (The waiting period permits the varnish film to solidify, yet the time is short enough to allow the two applications to incorporate, one into the other.)

Title _____

Author

Accession No.

Call No. 8

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*Composition—
a Matter of
Geometry*

WHEREAS the choice of colors or the adherence to one or another school of thought is a matter of taste—you may or you may not like certain colors or a certain style or manner of painting—in the matter of composition such considerations cease to exist. A good or a bad composition is not a matter of fashion. It does not depend on the vagaries of taste. A good or a bad composition proves itself with mathematical precision. The arrangement of objects in space is harmonious or discordant; this experience communicates itself to us empirically—there is no need for a specialized education in order to arrive at the proper conclusion.

Balance

Now, balance as such in a painting is not a particular virtue, but the manner in which it is achieved will account for the degree of harmony, or the intensity of the representation. To be sure, two and two will balance four, and four and four will balance eight, but such relations will hardly be capable of stirring us. It is up to the painter's ingenuity to find out and develop relations of masses on the painting's plane which will make a composition interesting and will not bog it down in inertia. *Symmetry* is a condition of perfect but inert balance; it will be entirely useless in a composition. Symmetry will neutralize any interest in the design because repetitious forms and space dispositions tire the eye of the beholder. Symmetry in a composition destroys the element of surprise, the adventurous exploits of the eye, and puts the imagination to sleep. The greater the variety and contrast of form elements in a painting, the greater interest it

Symmetry

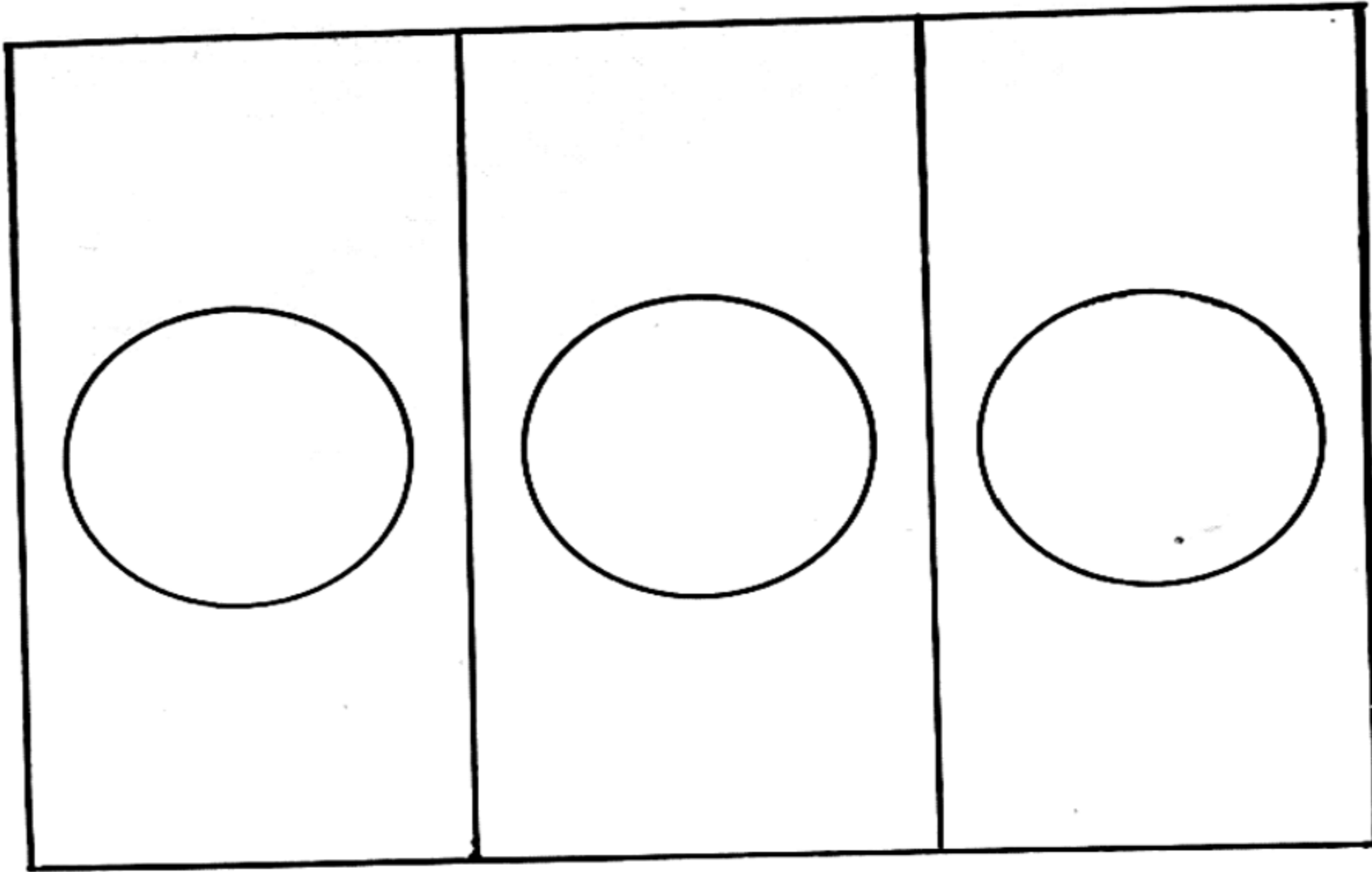


DIAGRAM A
Symmetrical design

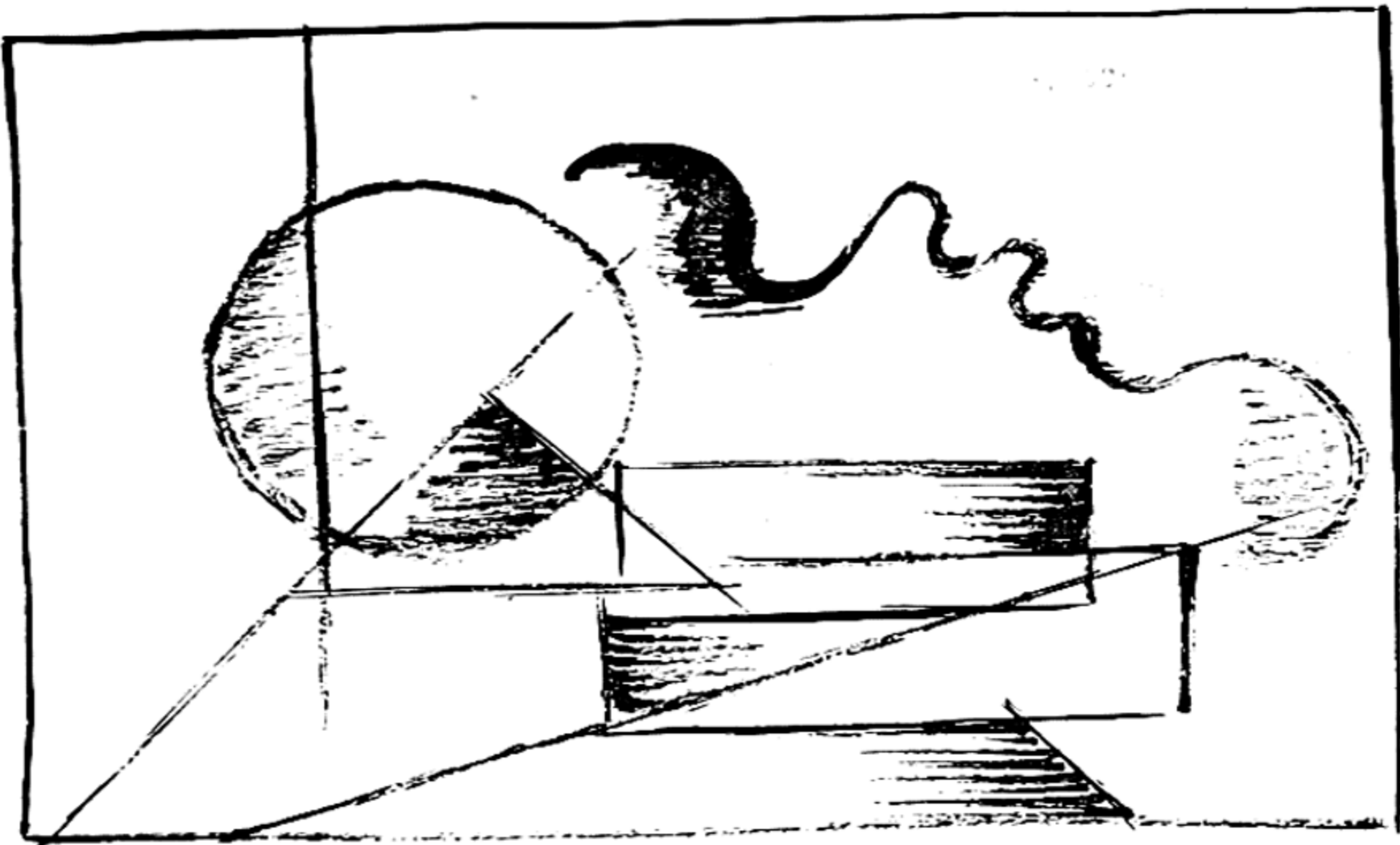


DIAGRAM B
Asymmetrical design (arrangement of variable forms)

offers to the exploring mind (see illustrations page 99). A variable arrangement of a painting's elements should, therefore, be the painter's chief concern. By the manner in which this arrangement is organized, the painter communicates his ideas to the beholder and gives these ideas *coherence* and *emphasis*.

Coherence

Coherence in a composition refers to organization of all parts of a painting under one leading principle. No matter how scattered the elements of a composition may be, all of them, like pillars of a bridge, should support the whole.

Emphasis

Emphasis in a pictorial composition should be reserved for the main theme. But the main theme need not necessarily be represented by one single object; a group of objects can make up a theme. However, all the details and paraphernalia of lesser relevance must be subordinated and must not fight the dominant role of the principal motif nor should they distract the eye or become autonomous. Details serve no other purpose than to stress the importance of the main motif.

Details

Planning of Composition

It follows that starting to arrange a composition by giving attention to irrelevant details would hardly serve a good purpose. It is conceivable, though, that one may start with drawing the knob on the top of a teakettle when composing a breakfast-table still life and proceed from there on, but I have my doubts whether this procedure would be expedient in furthering the integration of our breakfast-table form elements.

Reducing Ob- jects to Abstract Forms

When composing, a far more sensible way is to give one's attention to the principal masses first. These principal masses are more easily comprehended when reduced to basic geometrical forms, such as



PLATE 23-A

Still life arrangement—photograph of objects

triangles, rectangles, cubes, cones, circles, and the like.

On Plate 23-A I have introduced a photograph of objects arranged as a composition. On Example B these objects have been reduced to basic shapes. As can be readily seen on this example, the *architecture* of the ensemble is the sole preoccupation of the draughtsman. The individual function and physiognomy of the various objects was neglected in order to concentrate attention on the formal relations and balance of the masses.

On Plate 24-A the next step in developing a composition is dem-

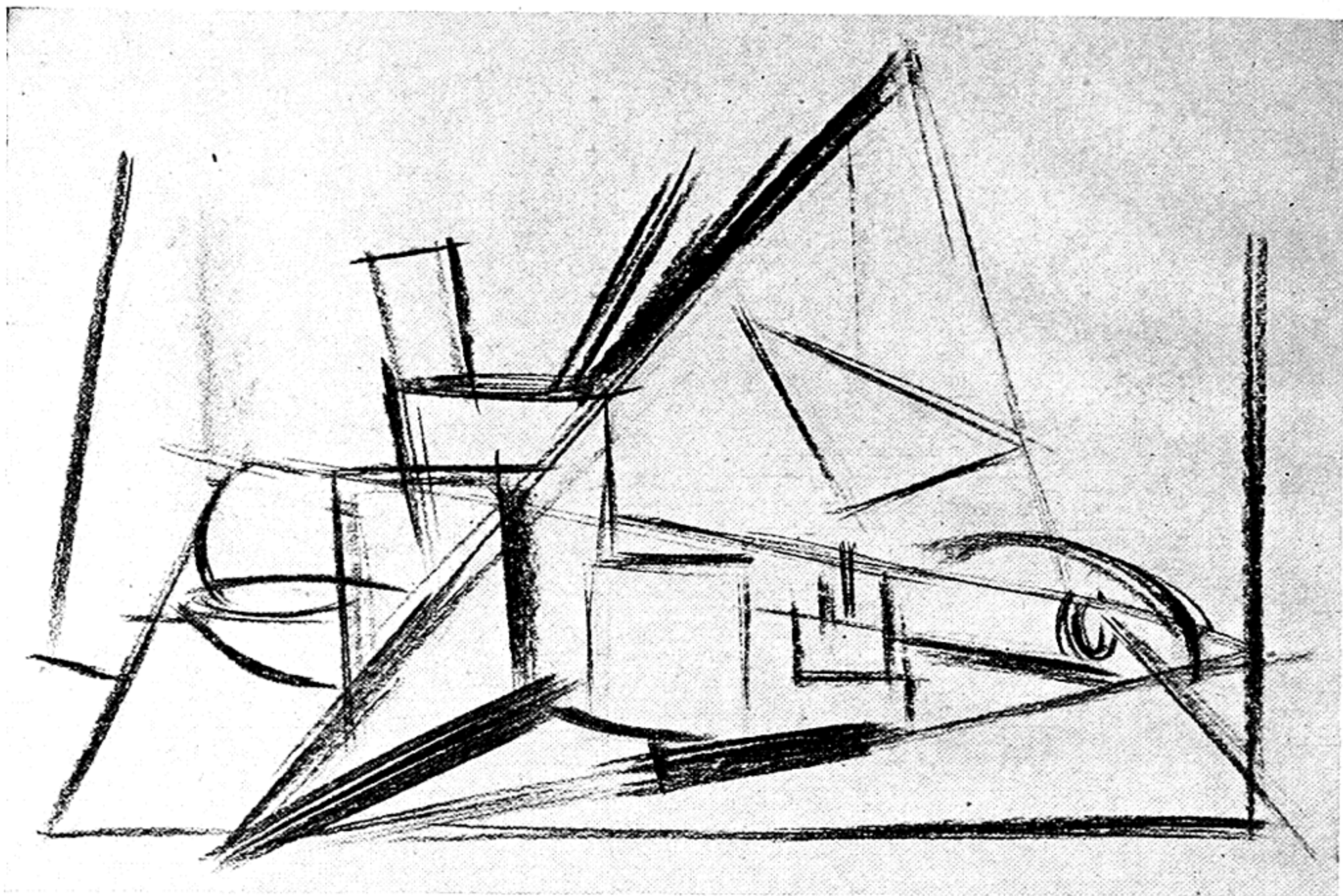


PLATE 23-B

Geometric analysis of objects

onstrated, namely, the introduction of individual shapes and particularities.

*Conditioning of
Natural Forms*

An important consideration which should be ever present in the mind of the painter is that objects or arrangements of objects (such as still life or landscape) as they appear in nature may not necessarily be suitable for incorporation in a composition. It is up to the painter to rearrange natural forms to suit his purposes. In other words, whereas nature, in most instances, may be disorganized—in a pictorial sense—and still be beautiful, the beauty of a composition is a

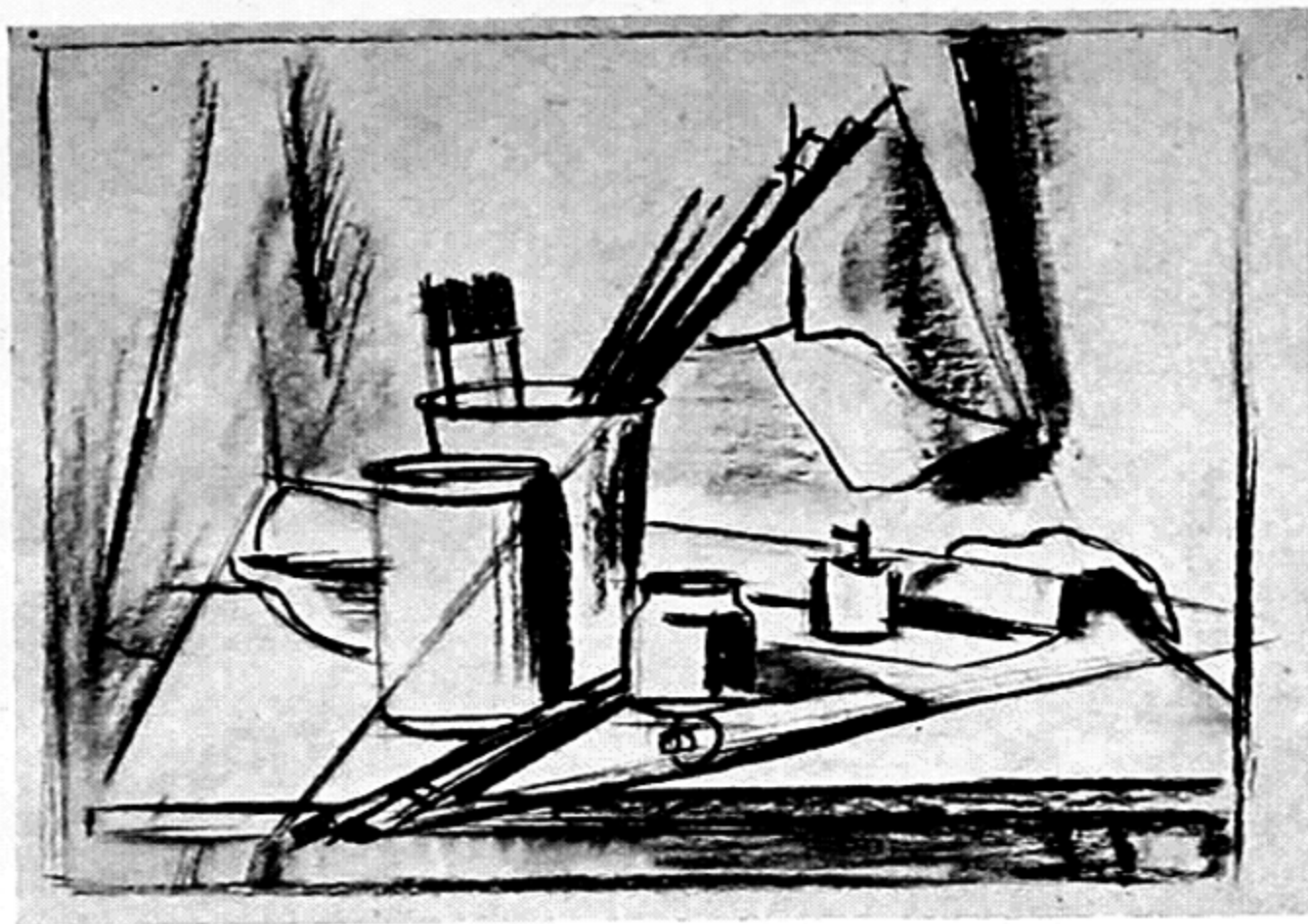


PLATE 24-A
Objects in composition

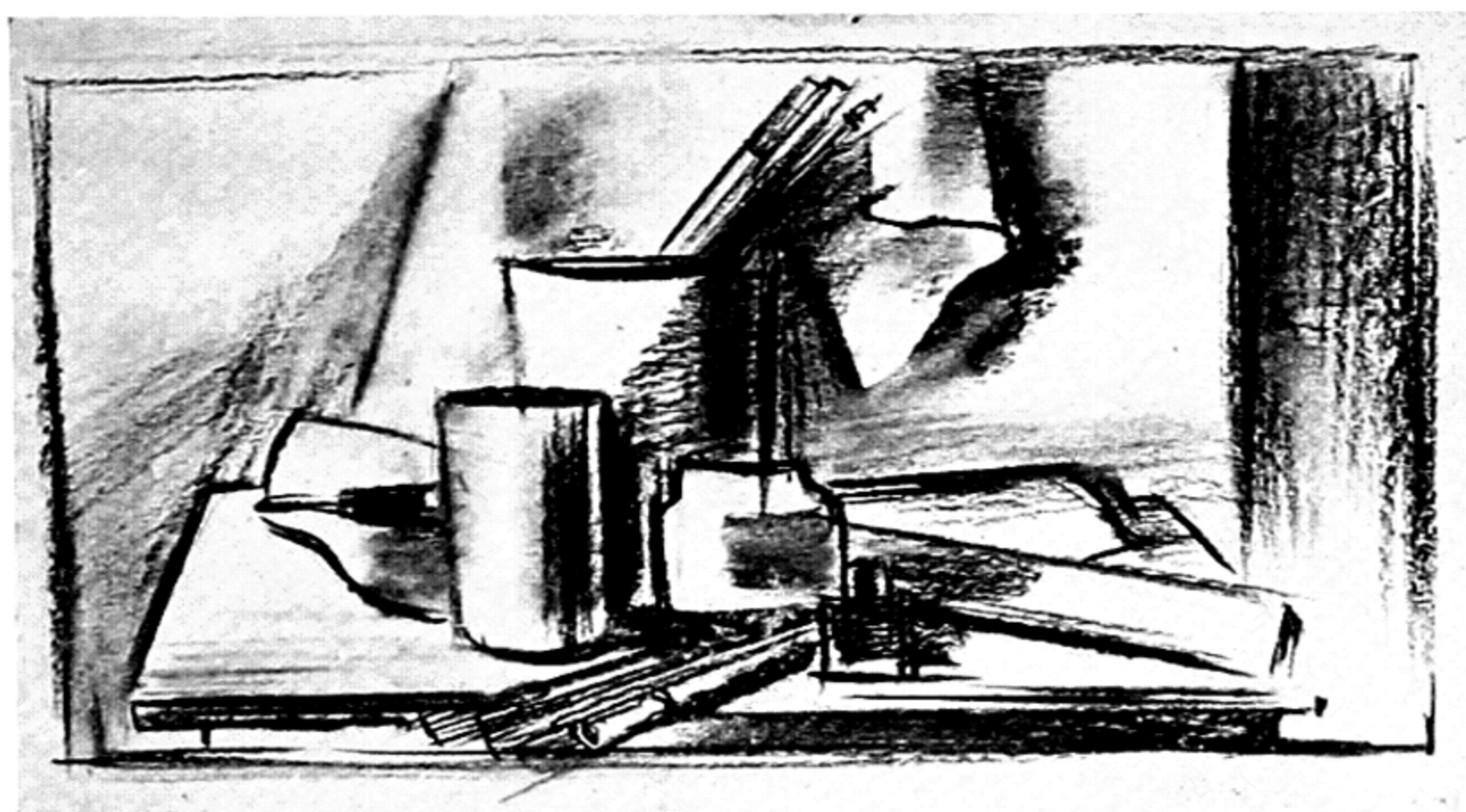


PLATE 24-B
Conditioning of objects



PLATE 25-A

Positive shapes



PLATE 25-B

Negative shapes

law unto itself. Plate 24-B represents such a rearrangement of objects into a more dramatic ensemble.

Shape of a Canvas—Proportion of Forms

One realizes at once in this example that a radical change has taken place in the painting measurements. This relation of a painting's two dimensions—height and width—will be the determining factor in the construction of a composition. Or, we may reverse the case and say that when conditioning the proportions of objects, the outer measurements of the painting will most likely demand some changes. Because the same object will appear different on differently proportioned surfaces, it is of prime importance whether one decides to choose a 16 x 20 or a 10 x 20 stretcher size for his composition.

Positive—Negative Shapes

This statement leads to another observation, namely, to differentiation between *positive* and *negative* shapes in a composition. Under positive shapes we understand the solid forms which make up a composition, and negative shape is the space around them (Plates 25-A & B). The confluence of these shapes will further add to the logic and harmony of the formal arrangement.

But not the dimensions alone account for the balance in a composition. Color, too, has weight and buoyancy, depending on its pitch and resonance. A small area of an active color can be powerful enough to tip the balance and outweigh a far larger area of a quiet and neutral color. Therefore, strong colors should not, as a rule, be placed at the edge or the corners of a painting. They can easily arrest the eye near the exit and pull the gaze away from the stage.

Weight of Color

Likewise, a relevant motif should not be placed close to the painting's border or at its corners. For the sake of the composition, it is as a rule best to permit these border areas to remain as inactive as possible.

Placing of Motifs

On Plate 26 I have introduced Peter Brueghel's "Harvesters" and on Plate 27, Mathias Grünewald's "Resurrection" as examples of masterful compositions.

The plan of the "Resurrection" is analysed on Plate 28. The main motif of this composition is placed on the upper central part of the canvas so as to command immediate attention. The ripples of the drapery unfold in swirling motion, enveloping the figure of the descending Christ. This motion of ascension is accentuated by the thrust of the draperies from the ground into the billowing space. Like petals, the draperies enwrap the center of the flower. Wide, circling, symmetric planes rotate around the figure of the Savior creating a supernal, tranquil balance as contrasted with the sharp, jagged, tortured forms of the tempest-torn figures below.

*Analysis of
"Resurrection"*

Now, glance once more over the picture's plane. Immediately the eye is drawn to the figure of Christ and, moving from one object to another, encompasses the entire scene.

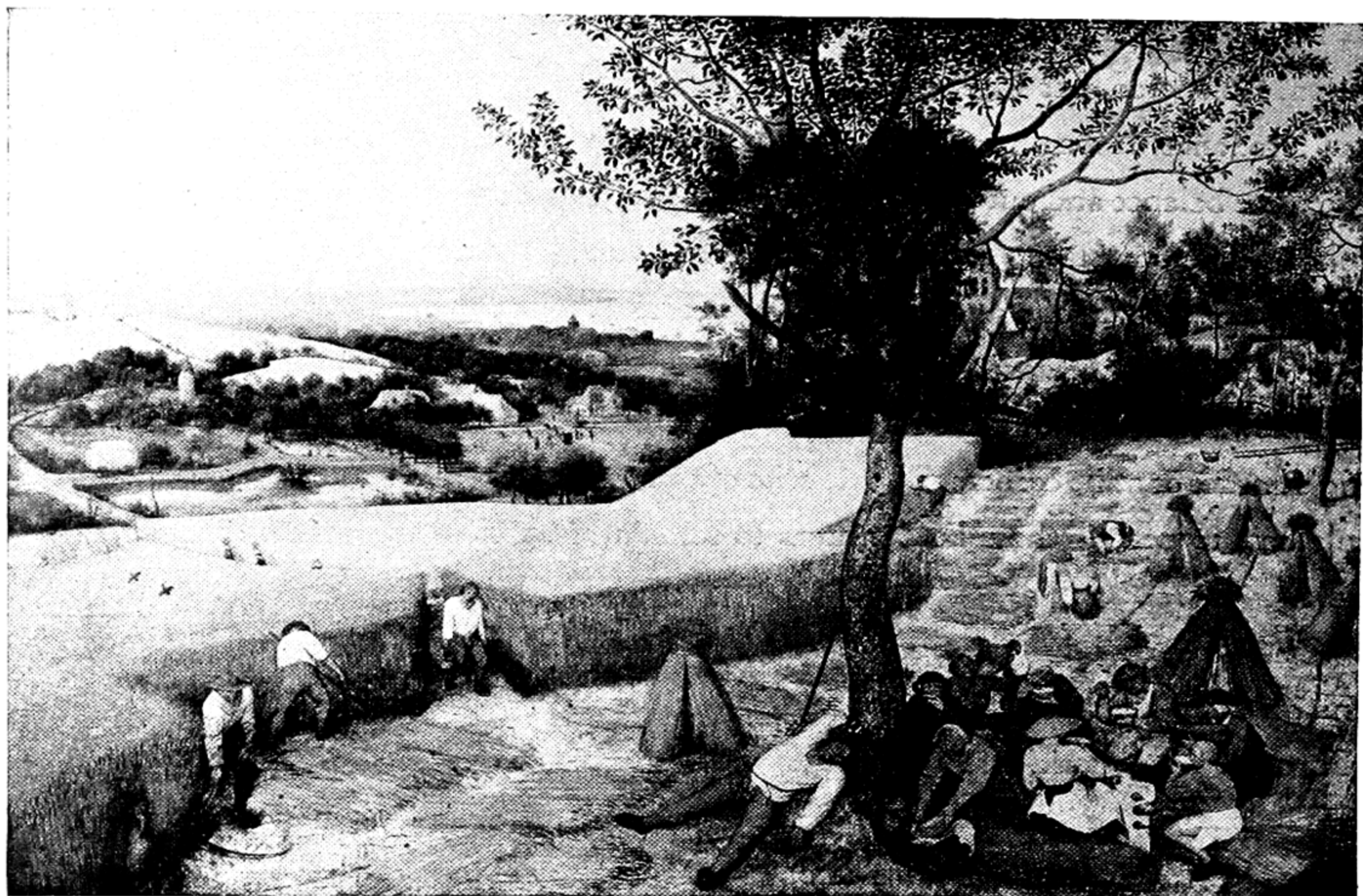


PLATE 26

Peter Brueghel—"The Harvesters"

Analysis of "Harvest"

In the "Harvest" (see Plate 29) emphasis is on the landscape, and the figures are merely illustrative accessories to it. That they are no more than accessorial can be realized from the fact that their story-telling value supersedes their value as formal elements in the composition. In other words, the figures are treated as details. Yet these details are grouped so as to emphasize the vertical axis on which the composition hinges. This axis balances the length and width of the painting and unfurls the parallels of the receding land-



PLATE 27

Mathias Grunewald's "Resurrection"



PLATE 28

Mathias Grunewald's "Resurrection"—analysis of composition

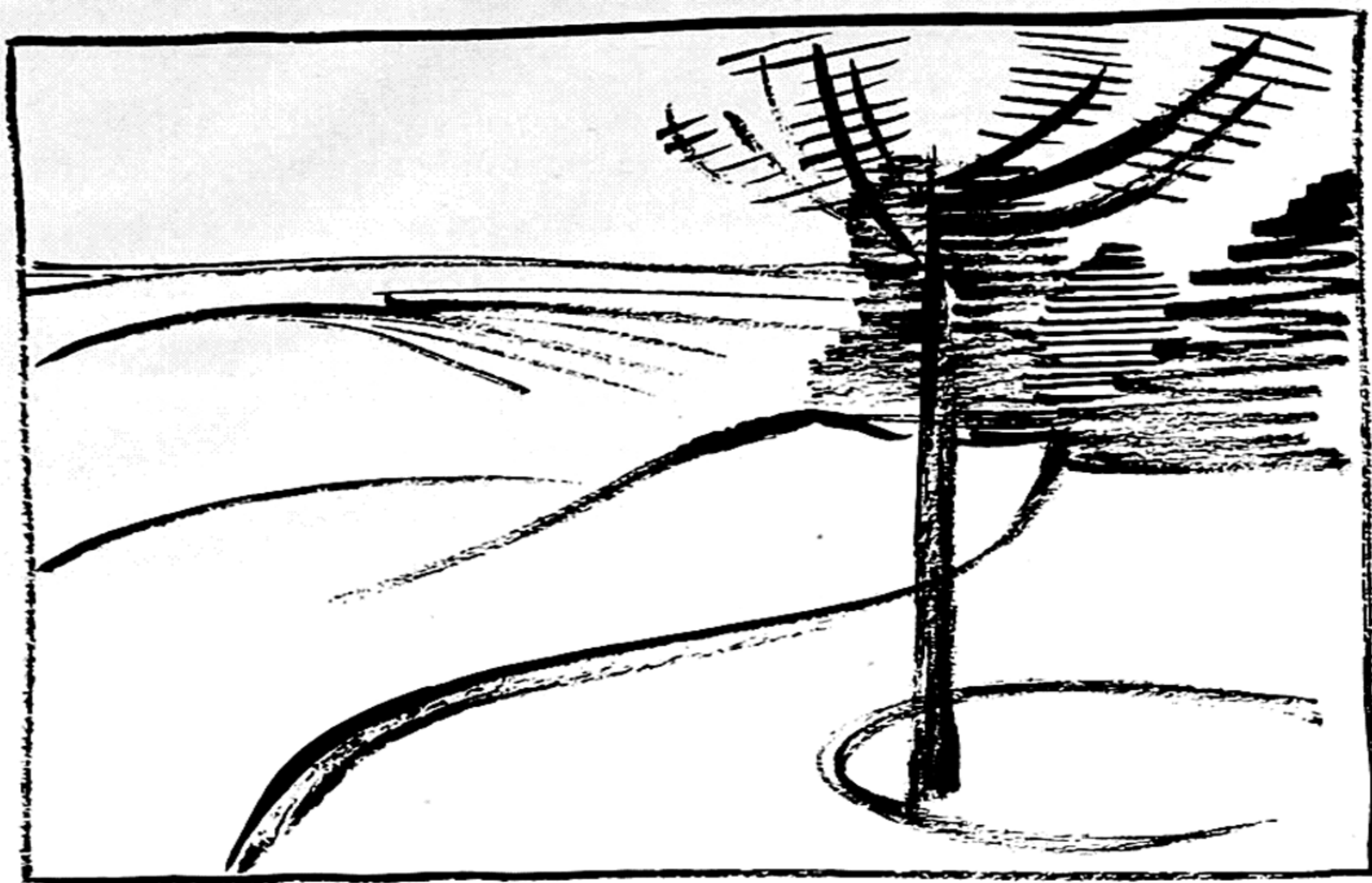


PLATE 29

"Harvest"—diagram of the composition

scape. The severity of this axis is mitigated by the spray of multiple small forms of foliage which adorn the branches. And then, counter-acting the horizontals and the verticals with a sovereign gesture, the master strategist lets the wheatfield plunge in a molded sweep obliquely across the pictures plane.

IN CONCLUSION

IN THE foregoing pages I have bountifully dispensed advice and admonition. I have advocated certain practices and warned against others. Now it might seem that the path to "true" art is free from snares and pitfalls. This, however, is not quite so. The roads and byways which I have cleared in this book have but one objective—the ascertainment of facts; and the facts here presented should serve the painter well. But the quest for art begins only where the quest for facts ends.

Glossary

Glaze—a transparent film of a darker color applied to a light under-painting

Grisaille—painting in gray colors

Impasto (pastose)—a thick application of paint

Paint—pigment mixed with oil

Painting medium—diluent for the tube paint

Pigment—dry color

Priming—coating of canvas usually made with white oil paint

Resin—exudates of some needle trees

Size—a solution of glue in water

Stand oil—linseed oil thickened by heating

Tinting power—capacity to impart color

Varnish—a solution of resin in turpentine or a petroleum distillate

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